

Please sir, why

THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,832

FRIDAY 29 JANUARY 1999

(150p) 45p

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Graham Kelly:
lay off the ref

SEVEN PAGES OF SPORT



Dr Margaret:
Swampy in a
dress

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jokes: how far
will you go?

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IN THE FRIDAY REVIEW



Photographers' stepladders outside the Ritz hotel in London yesterday before the 50th birthday party of Annabel Elliot, an art dealer

Peter Macdiarmid

Lawrence family lawyers to be censured in inquiry report

THE CRUSADING left-wing barrister Michael Mansfield will be criticised in the report of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry for his role in the ill-fated private prosecution mounted by the murdered teenager's parents.

In a controversial finding that is certain to infuriate the Lawrences, Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, chairman of the public inquiry, plans to question Mr Mansfield's professional judgement in allowing the family to pursue the case.

The family's solicitor, Imran Khan, who has a reputation for championing high-profile anti-Establishment cases, faces similar criticism over the private prosecution, which led to

BY KATHY MARKS

three of the five prime suspects being acquitted of Stephen's murder.

Sir William's report is in its final stages and is expected to be delivered to the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, next week.

The *Independent* understands from legal sources that Mr Mansfield, a QC, and Mr Khan received letters before Christmas warning them that they would be censured in the report, which will be published in mid-February. They are understood to have made a spirited defence of their actions in written responses to Sir William and his advisers.

Neville and Doreen Lawrence, Stephen's parents, embarked on the private prosecution – such a rare course of action that it was only the fourth case in 130 years – after the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) discontinued its case against the five suspects: Jamie Acourt, Neil Acourt, David Norris, Gary Dobson and Luke Knight.

Three of them, Knight, Dobson and Neil Acourt, stood trial at the Old Bailey in 1996. But Mr Mansfield, who led the prosecution, was compelled to abandon the case after the judge, Mr Justice Curtis, ruled that crucial identification evidence by the main witness, Duwayne

Brooks, was inadmissible. Mr Brooks, Stephen's schoolfriend, was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress after the murder, and Mr Justice Curtis said his evidence was "contaminated" and unreliable. On the judge's direction, the three defendants were formally acquitted and, under English law, can never again be tried for the same offence – even if compelling new evidence were to emerge.

The publicity that accompanied the private prosecution – not to mention the subsequent inquest and public inquiry – would almost certainly enable the other two men to argue that they could not now receive a fair trial.

Stephen, 18, was stabbed to death by a white gang in an unprovoked racist attack as he and Mr Brooks were waiting for a bus in Eltham, south-east London, in April 1993. Sir William's report will criticise 23 Metropolitan Police officers over the bungled murder investigation.

Mr Khan declined to comment last night, and Mr Mansfield failed to return telephone calls. Both men are believed to be angry at the prospect of being criticised by Sir William, a retired High Court judge.

The Lawrences are bound to be upset by the attack on their lawyers, who have spearheaded their six-year

campaign for justice and become close family friends in the process.

Mr Khan became the family's representative in the immediate aftermath of the murder, while Mr Mansfield's involvement dates from late 1993. They are both thought to have waived their fees during certain periods.

The wisdom of launching the private prosecution has been questioned repeatedly over the years, since the evidence of Mr Brooks – who witnessed the murder – was always known to be problematic.

Stephen's parents maintain they had no choice but to take action themselves after the

CPS discontinued its case against the suspects in July 1993.

After Knight, Dobson and Neil Acourt were committed for trial in 1995, Mrs Lawrence described the CPS's decision to drop the charges as "an act as hurtful and as painful in its effect as the news that Stephen had been killed".

The Lawrences still hold the view publicly at least, that the three men would be behind bars if the matter had been left to the Old Bailey jury.

Howard Youngerwood, the senior CPS lawyer who took the decision to discontinue the original prosecution, launched a strong attack on Mr Mansfield and Mr Khan at the public inquiry.

He said that by insisting on going ahead with the private prosecution they had wrecked all chance of bringing Stephen's killers to justice. There had been no hope of a conviction on the evidence available, he said.

Top lawyers who could not convict, page 4

Massacre ordered at top level in Belgrade, says US

THE MASSACRE of Albanian villagers in the village of Racak in Kosovo this month was ordered at the highest level of the Serbian government, according to leaked Western intelligence that may provide the final trigger for Nato bombing.

The transcripts are of telephone conversations between Nikola Sainovic, a deputy prime minister, and General Sreten Lukic of the Serbian Interior Ministry special forces, and were obtained from intelligence sources by *The Washington Post*. Serbia has been accused of sending "hit squads" of ski-masked special forces into Kosovo to terrorise the local population.

The transcripts show Serbian security forces were ordered to "go in heavy" at Racak, the village in southern Kosovo where 45 people were killed on 15 January. Mr Sainovic is said to have called General Lukic as the bloody assault

BY RAYMOND WHITAKER
in Pristina
AND ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

was going on, and asked how many people had been killed.

The massacre at Racak was the worst in nearly two years of bitter conflict between the Serbian authorities and guerrillas of the Kosovo Liberation Army. Amid international outrage and demands that Nato should carry out its threats of military action, the two men discussed several times how to deflect blame for the bloodshed, according to the transcripts.

The newspaper did not say how it obtained the transcripts. But experts in US signals intelligence say there are many ways Washington could have come by the telephone messages. The US maintains an extensive range of intelligence facilities across Europe, and if the message had at any time

used a microwave or satellite signal, it could have been intercepted.

The National Security Agency, based near Washington, runs the US signals intelligence programme worldwide. The very secretive Special Collection Service also gathers signals intelligence, and has been reported to run some of its operations from US embassies. "It is extremely unusual for sensitive intelligence, particularly of this sort, to be publicly available," said John Pike of the Federation of American Scientists. One suggestion was that the US considered the diplomatic benefit to be greater than the loss of a possible source of intelligence.

The leaked US revelations will add pressure on Europe to take action against Serbia.

In Brussels yesterday, Nato's Secretary-General, Javier Solana, said the alliance "stands ready to act and rules

out no option" at this "a critical turning point in the Kosovo crisis". Nato diplomats said the six-nation Contact Group, which meets today in London, would call on the parties to agree to talks within four days. The Nato Council is to meet tomorrow to back up that initiative with a military ultimatum.

Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the UN, also said the military threat was needed in order to back up the diplomatic initiative. "I am pushing very hard for a political settlement," Mr Annan said in Brussels.

In Kosovo, the violence continued in the west of the province yesterday with Serb troops killing five Kosovo Liberation Army fighters in two clashes. The clashes took place south of Prizren and near Djakovica, 12 miles south-west of Prizren.

Nato's final warning, page 13

Mandelson des. res. up for sale

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

PETER MANDELSON is to sell the £750,000 house in west London's fashionable Notting Hill, which led to his downfall as a cabinet minister last month.

Mr Mandelson, who stands to make a £200,000 profit on the house in just two years, will buy a flat. But he is unlikely to move to a more downmarket area; friends suggest he will stay in or close to Notting Hill.

The former Trade and Industry Secretary will use the proceeds to pay off the £373,000 personal loan from Geoffrey Robinson, the former Paymaster-General, which enabled him to buy the four-storey Victorian terrace house for £475,000. He also took out a mortgage with the Britannia Building Society.

Last month's disclosure of their arrangement provoked the resignations of both men and the departure of Charlie Whelan as press secretary to the Chancellor, Gordon Brown.



The house: Likely to be sold at a £30,000 profit

Mr Mandelson hopes the decision will enhance his prospects of returning to the Cabinet before the next general election. He said yesterday: "I want to repay Geoffrey Robinson's loan because that's the right thing to do... It is a necessary step to sort everything out."

Mr Mandelson said of his house: "It's not huge, but it is nice, in a good street with smashing neighbours, and I will miss it."

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IN THE INDEPENDENT ON SATURDAY

The 50 best places to eat Vegetarian food in THE INFORMATION

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO STAYING IN AND GOING OUT IN THE WEEK AHEAD

THE BEST WRITING, WEEK IN, WEEK OUT: DEBORAH ROSS, HOWARD JACOBSON, HAMISH MCRAE, MARK STEEL, ROBERT FISK, DEBORAH ORR, TERENCE BLACKER, JOHN WALSH, RICHARD WILLIAMS, DAVID AARONOVITCH, SUSANNAH FRANKEL, THOMAS SUTCLIFFE, MILES KINGTON, SUE ARNOLD, ANDREAS WHITTEM SMITH

Dobson's raid for nurses' pay rise

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

gain the maximum impact for the launch of a £1m advertising campaign to recruit nurses to the NHS, which has been forced to hire nurses from the Philippines.

But Mr Dobson came under fire last night when it emerged he will use some of the £1m allocated in the comprehensive spending review for modernisation in the health service to fund the nurses' pay rises.

"It's bad because the money was allocated for modernising the NHS which is desperately needed. There are buildings falling down, as well as general practices that need to be upgraded. The pay rises should have been funded from the surpluses in the Treasury, not from the modernisation fund."

The Chancellor, Gordon Brown, said the rises were "affordable and right" but he insisted the Treasury's spending allocations to the Whitehall departments would not be changed to pay for the rises, which exceed the Treasury's 2.5 per cent inflation target.

The Chancellor is expected to give a further boost to all low paid workers in the Budget, on 9 March, by establishing a 10p lower rate of income tax for hundreds of thousands on low incomes who are currently paying 20p in the pound. It could be funded by abolishing the £2bn mortgage interest tax relief.

The Cabinet yesterday agreed to give the biggest pay rises to trainee nurses to try to tackle the nurse shortages in hospitals across Britain, which have contributed to the plight of patients being left on trolleys for more than 24 hours.

Rises of 11 per cent for nurse trainees and 4.7 per cent for most nurses are to be paid in full from 1 April. Family doctors are expected to get around 3.5 per cent and some GPs will qualify for an additional 4 per cent held over from last year.

Mr Dobson will delay the announcement until Monday to

Paying for health, page 10



Kate MacGregor of Help at Leeds City Art Gallery launching a project with British Gas to stop the cold killing the old Tim Smith

Trimble accuses IRA of murder

BY DAVID McKITTRICK
Irish Correspondent

under cover of parliamentary privilege, he named more than a dozen men who he said had been involved in the killing of Protestants in 1976.

The Democratic Unionist party leader claimed the men had been named in an RUC document as being involved in the so-called Kingsmills massacre in south Armagh. The RUC said yesterday it was attempting to check the authenticity of the document.

While Mr Paisley received support from some quarters he was criticised by SDLP deputy leader Seamus Mallon and by

one of the men he named, who challenged him to repeat the allegations outside the Commons.

Mr Mallon said: "I am very angry about this. It puts people's lives at risk and takes away their good name."

He said he personally knew many of the individuals involved and it is inconceivable that they would have been involved in the Kingsmills massacre or any form of paramilitary activity.

One of those named was a 51-year-old father of seven, Eugene Reavey, who lost three brothers in a loyalist attack on the day before the Kingsmills shooting. Saying he was horrified by Mr Paisley's accusations, he went on: "I'm an innocent man. I have never been involved in terrorism in my life. I have never even been questioned by the RUC. I find it all incredible."

His solicitor, Rory McShane, added: "We are going to ask for a meeting with the RUC Chief Constable to discuss the issue of Mr Reavey's personal security which is now in jeopardy. We want to ask the Chief Constable whether this document really does exist and, if so, how it was leaked."

The RUC, meanwhile, said

that dissident loyalists may have been behind a pipe-bomb attack on the home of a Catholic family in Dungannon. Co Tyrone. A woman and four children were asleep in the house when the device was thrown in.

It did not explode and no one was injured. This was the latest in a series of sporadic incidents, spread over various areas of Northern Ireland, in which Catholic homes have been attacked.

Describing the killing of Mr Collins, RUC chief inspector Eddie Graham said: "He suffered quite serious head injuries with a number of stab wounds to his upper body. It's more akin to a crime carried out by primitive cavemen than it is of a country entering the 21st century."

Tube staff vote to strike

BY BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

MILLIONS of London commuters face severe disruption on the Underground network after staff voted overwhelmingly for strikes that could last up to three days.

Leaders of the RMT rail union have given management until next Thursday to address their concerns about a plan for partial privatisation of the system drawn up by the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott.

Ironically Mr Prescott is not only considered to be a union sympathiser but is a leading member of the RMT.

Jimmy Knapp, general secretary of the union, said his members would be considering during the next week whether to stage walkouts over one, two or three days. London Underground is expected to provide a skeleton service.

Asked why his members were prepared to inflict serious inconvenience on commuters, Mr Knapp said he believed his members enjoyed considerable support. "The public shares the same frustration with the effects of privatisation as our members. They can see the validity of our argument."

The RMT leader said his members were deeply concerned about their job security because of a scheme to "contract out" parts of the network's infrastructure.

Mr Knapp estimates that about 4,000 employees will find themselves switched to new companies under the plan. The union is seeking confirmation that no member will be transferred to the new businesses without consent. Mr Knapp said management had written to all employees saying if they did not transfer they would be deemed to have resigned.

A management spokesman said the union had chosen to ignore repeated assurance from Mr Prescott about their jobs. The RMT had chosen the "path of confrontation", he said.

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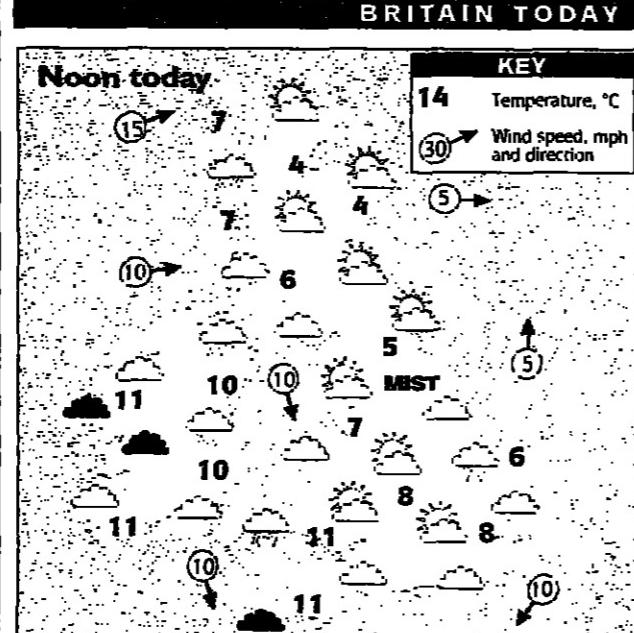


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FORECAST
General situation: Central and eastern Scotland will start bright but cold before turning cloudy this afternoon. Western Scotland and Northern Ireland will be dull with drizzle. After a few sunnier spells, north and western England will stay mainly dry with a few sunnier spells developing. The south and south-west England will have a lot of cloud and some rain. The Midlands and southern England will be mainly dry with some drizzle with the odd sunny break, but East Anglia will have more cloud and spots of drizzle.

E Anglia, E England, N, NE England, Scotland: Any remnants of overnight rain will soon clear away to leave just a few sunny spells and a lot of cloud. A light and variable wind. Max temp 7-10°C (43-50°F).

Cheshire, S, SW England, Wales: Some bright spells are likely in the east but it will be mostly cloudy with some drizzle on coasts and hills. A light north-westerly wind. Max temp 8-11°C (46-52°F).

West Country, N, NW England, Lake Dist., Isle of Man: Some early mist and low cloud, but it will be predominantly dry with a few sunny intervals. A light north-westerly wind. Max temp 7-9°C (46-48°F).

N Ireland: Mostly cloudy with occasional outbreaks of drizzle, especially on hills. A light westerly wind. Max temp 8-11°C (46-52°F).

S & SE Scotland, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, N, NE: Some bright spells but generally cloudy with drizzle, especially on hills. A light west-south-westerly wind. Max temp 7-9°C (46-48°F).

Scotlands: Some bright spells but generally cloudy with drizzle, especially on hills. A light west-south-westerly wind. Max temp 7-9°C (46-48°F).

Orkney, Shetland: Some bright spells but generally cloudy with drizzle, especially on hills. A light west-south-westerly wind. Max temp 7-9°C (46-48°F).

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PLUS ANNA
PAVORD'S GARDEN
WORKSHOPS
AND CHARLES
SHAPE MURRAY OR
ELVIS

TERENCE RECKER
& WHITEMAN SMITH

Tube
Staff
Vote to
Strike

By STEPHEN CLEMENT
Editor



BY RHYS WILLIAMS

A SINGLE mother of 34 and a bespectacled orphan schoolboy may not be the most promising combination, but together they have become the publishing sensation of the past two years.

The latest chapter in the remarkable story of Joanna Rowling's beguiling literary creation began yesterday with the paperback publication of the second book in her Harry Potter series, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*.

Potter is the schoolboy wizard whose enthusiastic adoption by children and grown-ups in their hundreds of thousands has had critics hailing Ms Rowling as the new Roald Dahl.

Platform One at King's Cross Station briefly becomes the mythical Platform 9 and three-quarters, the place from which young Harry departs for school at the beginning of each new term and which functions like the wardrobe in C S Lewis's *Narnia* chronicles.

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, the first in what will eventually develop into a seven-part series, introduced the eponymous hero to a generation of computer games junkies previously thought to have been lost to the charms of print. The results have been extraordinary. Sales of the two books are now nudging half-a-million, while the hardback version of *Chamber of Secrets* spent its first month on the shelf as the bestseller across all books.

Ms Rowling has garnered an armful of awards, including the Smarties Book Prize (the children's equivalent of the Booker) in consecutive years and a place on the 1998 Whitbread shortlist. Hollywood lent its validation last autumn when Warner Brothers secured the film rights to both books for a seven-figure sum.

Master Potter is an orphan forced to live under the stairs by cruel relatives until he learns on his 11th birthday that he is, in fact, the son of famous wizards, whereupon he is whisked off to Hogwarts' School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. There he takes lessons in potions, herb lore and Quidditch, a kind of football played on broomsticks. Oh yes, and he saves the school and the world from the fallen angel Lord Voldemort, a former head boy of Hogwarts, who chooses to turn his magic against the in-

stitution. In other words, a ripping yarn of good versus evil that legitimately conjures up the New Testament, only with characters that recall Roald Dahl.

The names of Dahl and C S Lewis are frequently mentioned alongside Ms Rowling's, a comparison at which she has balks. "C S Lewis is quite simply a genius and I'm not a genius," she said. "And while I think Dahl is a master at what he did, I do think my books are more moral than his. He also wrote very overblown comic characters, whereas I think mine are more three-dimensional."

Either way, critics have universally lauded Ms Rowling's as she carries readers into a world of invention where Harry flies a car into a tree in flagrant breach of rules on the misuse of Muggle (as normal people are known) artefacts. In the second book Harry unravels the secrets of giant spiders, schoolmates turned to stone and an unpleasant creature that has taken to lurking in the school plumbing.

Potter was drawn with spectacles because, Ms Rowling said, she had worn thick glasses as a child and was frustrated that "species" were swots but never heroes.

Nominally pitched at 9 to 12-year-olds, Harry's appeal has been broader. Parents who were complaining about their children's refusal to turn off the light until they had finished one more chapter became the next Potter converts. The publishers



Joanna Rowling who wrote in a cafe to escape her cold flat and (above left) the character, Harry Potter

Bloomsbury took the unusual step of bringing out an adult version of the first book last September. It was wrapped in a design-conscious cover featuring a black and white photograph of a steam train with the title flashed in citrus orange letter. The idea was to spare adult readers on public transport the chore of hiding the chil-

dren's version behind their morning paper.

If Harry's adventures make for compelling reading, then Ms Rowling's story is also worth a chapter or two. After working for Amnesty International, she went to Portugal to teach English. There she married a journalist, but within weeks of the birth of a daughter, Jessica, they had separated.

Divorced, penniless and now a single mother, she returned to Edinburgh, where her sister lived. Much of the first novel was written in Nicolson's, a cafe in the city where she would escape her cold and miserable flat. While Jessica slept in her pram, Ms Rowling stretched out her coffee and scribbled furiously away in long hand.

The manuscript was dispatched to Penguin, who turned it down, and then HarperCollins, where it gathered dust for a year. Finally she enlisted the help of a literary agent and, within days of sending the book, Bloomsbury gratefully snatched it up. The rest could well be literary and cinematic history.

YOUNG BESTSELLERS

Past bestselling books...

- Watership Down*, by Richard Adams (1972)
- The Magic Finger*, by Roald Dahl (1974)
- Thunder and Lightnings*, by Jan Mark (1976)
- Each Peach, Pear, Plum*, by Allan and Janet Ahlberg (1978)
- Matilda*, by Roald Dahl (1980)
- The BFG*, by Roald Dahl (1982)
- The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole Aged 13 3/4*, by Sue Townsend (1984)
- Going Solo*, by Roald Dahl (1986)
- The Witches*, by Roald Dahl (1988)
- Esio Trot*, by Roald Dahl (1990)
- Truckers*, by Terry Pratchett (1992)
- Flour Babies*, by Anne Fine (1994)
- Goose Bumps*, by R L Stine (1996)
- Children's Book of Books* (1998)

Source: Bookwatch Ltd

Navy finds the sunken treasure of Charles I

BY STEPHEN GOODWIN
Scotland Correspondent

MARINE ARCHAEOLOGISTS will today announce the discovery of what they believe to be the treasure-laden wreck of Charles I's baggage ferry, the *Blessing of Burntisland*.

Lost in a storm crossing the Firth of Forth in 1633, the ship was loaded with the king's priceless possessions.

The archaeologists believe it could be the most important find for them since the discovery of the Tudor warship the *Mary Rose*.

The *Blessing* foundered shortly after leaving Burntisland, bound for Leith. Twenty carts loaded with the King's personal possessions from his hunting palace at Falkland were aboard.

The wooden ferry, known to treasure hunters as 'Britain's Arkhamham', was also carrying a 280-piece silver dinner

service commissioned by King Henry VIII and other ornate tapestries, silks and trappings for Charles's coronation tour of Scotland.

The King watched helplessly from his flagship, the *Dreadnaught*, as a large slice of royal Stuart treasure vanished under the waves and more than 30 of his entourage perished. There were only two survivors.

The distressed monarch cut short his tour and returned to London where 16 years later he lost more than his silverware. Details of the wreck, 120ft down and one mile off-shore, are to be disclosed at Kinghorn, Fife – one day before the 350th anniversary of the execution of the King in London.

Navy experts and marine

archaeologists are not expected to be able to say it definitely is the ship.

But according to defence sources the wreck, buried under several feet of silt, matches the size and shape of the barge and there is "growing optimism" it is the *Blessing of Burntisland*.

The ship could contain silver used by the King at his coronation, and also a "time capsule" with masses of preserved artefacts from the period.

The search began in 1997 and the site was finally located by HMS *Roeback*, a Royal Navy hydrographic survey ship. It was the outcome of a joint effort between the Royal Navy and the charitable Burntisland Heritage Trust.

Computer-produced images of the wreck site led to detailed investigation by divers in De-

cember, and the task of verifying whether it is the historic wreck is still under way.

Another royal ferry sank in the same waters 44 years earlier, carrying the dowry of Ann of Denmark for her wedding to King James VI of Scotland, Charles's father.

With either vessel of great significance, Donald Dewar, Secretary of State for Scotland, has imposed a Protection of Wrecks Order on the site. It is expected that final confirmation that it is the *Blessing* will come in the summer when delicate work on raising the wreck will begin.

The wreck is said to lie at the very point fixed last May by the successful English map downer Jim Longton.

He sailed the route of the ill-fated vessel with his metal diving rod and pendulum.

*Cathedral cities must be retained in advance and are subject to full fare paying passengers only and may be altered with companion originating from same address within 50 miles of UK, or 100 miles from airports - and from the city of Edinburgh, and 40 miles of USA, major airport. All seats must be booked at a Continental Airlines ticket on a Combi-tariff flight number. Trans selected airports only and operated by our code-share partner Virgin Atlantic.

BEWITCHING LINK TO CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

HARRY POTTER is far from the first young hero of a favourite children's book to have enjoyed a more exotic education than the National Curriculum allows. The intrepid sorcerer's apprentice at Hogwarts' School of Witchcraft and Wizardry – with his two mega-selling novels, thriving adult fan club and seven-figure Warner Bros movie deal – has carried into the 1990s a long tradition in British children's writing of spellbinding yarns.

Decade after decade, teachers try to make new readers love the sort of gritty streetwise writing that will strengthen their grip on the world. And, decade after decade, children's tastes prove the imagination grasps reality in a more mysterious way. In strongly plotted, vividly imagined children's literature, the concept of "escapism" means little.

It is true the Harry Potter craze connects with the bewitching classics of the immediate pre- and postwar years more closely than with the more recent grimmer children's fare. Any Harry fan who needs another fix of comic sorcery should seek out T H White's sparklingly witty Arthurian fantasy from 1938, *The Sword in the Stone*. Indeed, White's wizard Merlin has graduated from "a college for Witches and Warlocks under the sea". The fizz and fun of the lessons he gives to his young pupils Kay and Wart mean that the book has sold less than almost any "adult" novel of its year.

Months earlier, JRR Tolkien had published *The Hobbit*; his Gandalf is the charismatic wizard responsible, then as now, "for so many quiet lads and lasses going off into the Blue for mad adventures". Not long before that, in 1934, PL Travers's *Mary Poppins* had placed her own benign hex on the sedate Banks household,

sliding up the bannisters and serving tea on the ceiling.

Harder to find now is the powerful blend of realism and magic that the former Poet Laureate John Masefield brought to his novels for children, *The Midnight Folk* and *The Box of Delights*. At the start of the century, Edith Nesbit had also planted plausible modern children in a colourful terrain of fantasy with *Five Children and It* and *The Phoenix and the Carpet*.

The very real Alice Liddell, Lewis Carroll's friend and muse, stands at the source of this rich stream of works that send grubbily authentic kids on fabulous but enriching missions. Look at the Potter



The latest Harry Potter

plots, and you will also discover archetypal elements common to folktales around the globe, as an orphaned or abandoned prince claims his birthright through cunning, craft and ordeal. Such yarns generally end with a crown and a marriage – although we may have to wait until the series' end for that.

Humphrey Carpenter, editor of the Oxford Companion to Children's Literature and himself the inventor of the comic wizard Mr Majelka, likens Rowling's books to "fake antique cars" and finds in them "an ingenious mish-mash of all sort of exciting things" rather than a genuinely new vision.

Boyd Tonkin

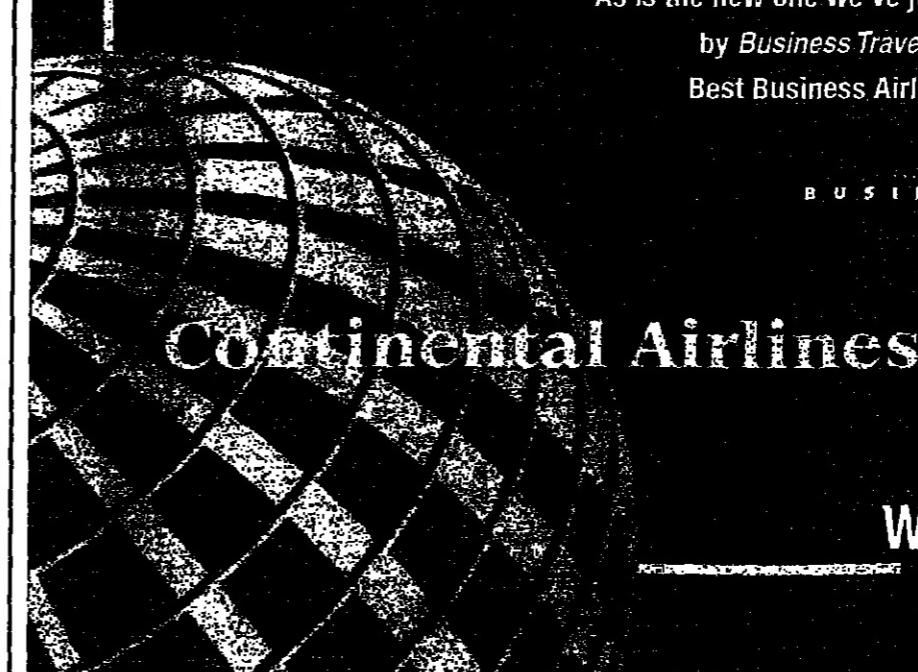
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Lawrence lawyers 'took wrong route'



THE QC: MICHAEL MANSFIELD

Michael Mansfield, a vegetarian who enjoys cycling, takes to the upstairs room of his London home whenever he feels frustrated to bang a battered old drum kit. One of the country's best-known lawyers, his clients have included the Angry Brigade, the Birmingham Six, the Bridgewater Three, Arthur Scargill and Patrick Nichols, who served 23 years for a murder that never happened.

The son of Conservative-voting parents, his interest in the law started when his mother defended herself when she was wrongly fined £10 for illegal parking. After studying philosophy and history at Keele University, Mansfield, 57, taught at a polytechnic and studied for his Bar exams by a correspondence course. He failed law law three times before passing and became a QC in 1989.

IT WAS, without a doubt, one of the cruellest moments in the Lawrence family's long campaign for justice.

Three men, who they believed to be the killers of their son Stephen, walked out of the dock at the Old Bailey, unpunished and now unpunishable. Doreen Lawrence collapsed in tears. Neville Lawrence froze, unable to believe his eyes.

The couple had pinned their hopes on the trial at the Old Bailey in April 1996. Two years earlier, with the backing of their legal team, solicitor Imran Khan and eminent QC Michael Mansfield, they launched a private prosecution of the men widely regarded as the prime murder suspects.

It was the only route that remained open, they believed, after the Crown Prosecution Service discontinued its case.

Not everyone agreed. Howard Youngerwood, the senior CPS lawyer who took the decision to drop the charges, was horrified.

He told Mr Khan that he was bound to fail because of the unreliability of the identification evidence of Duwayne Brooks, Stephen's friend, and begged him not to proceed.

It would have been far better said Mr Youngerwood, to wait for new evidence to emerge so that the CPS prosecution could be reactivated. He told the public inquiry that when he discovered that the Lawrences planned to ignore his advice, "I was so desperate, I collapsed in the street".

Others observers questioned whether Mr Mansfield

BY KATHY MARKS

and Mr Khan – celebrated criminal defence lawyers, but with no experience of conducting a prosecution – had the necessary expertise to handle the case.

But the Metropolitan Police, who had reopened the murder investigation under an energetic detective superintendent,

marsh Magistrates Court as a public display of support.

At Belmarsh, charges against two of the suspects – Jamie Acourt and David Norris, both 18, were dropped because of insufficient evidence. But Dobson, 18, Neil Acourt, 20, and Luke Knight, 18, were sent for trial.

The case hinged on Mr Brooks, who had picked out the three defendants at identification parades. In legal argument, though, doubts were cast on his evidence, and the trial judge, Mr Justice Curtis, said Mr Brooks did not know whether he was "on his head or his heels".

With his evidence ruled inadmissible, Mr Mansfield had no option but to abandon the case, and the three were formally acquitted on the direction of the judge, who praised the Lawrences' "statesmanlike" conduct.

The video – which showed Neil Acourt waving a knife said to be similar to the one used to kill Stephen – was never shown to the jury. The private prosecution was a desperate measure by a family who had been let down by police and the prosecuting authorities.

They gave the family a surveillance video that showed the suspects brandishing knives and fantasising about killing black people.

The Lawrences – who raised £45,000 to finance the prosecution – received a further morale boost when Ian Johnston, the Metropolitan Police's Assistant Commissioner, attended the committal proceedings at Bel-

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THE SOLICITOR: IMRAN KHAN

Imran Khan not a solicitor new to controversy. After representing two Asian men accused of murdering the white schoolboy Richard Everitt, he received death threats. He was also told by police he should not attend a demonstration in north London being held for the men, who had been convicted of murder and violent disorder. "I can appreciate that people might be angry and frustrated, particularly those who have lost someone, but making threats to my life goes beyond reasonable behaviour," he said. He was at the demonstration. Slim and charming, he often represents high-profile race-related cases. Within days of Stephen Lawrence's murder, he was representing his parents, Doreen and Neville. With Michael Mansfield, he has worked beside them since.

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Yard plans SOS units after custody deaths

SCOTLAND YARD plans to bring in rapid response medical units after growing concern about the number of "vulnerable" people dying after they have been restrained and held in police custody.

The move is prompted by the death earlier this month of Roger Sylvester, a mentally ill man who collapsed after being restrained by eight police officers. The black 30-year-old died a week after collapsing on a hospital floor in north London. He was seized by police after a report that he was naked and causing a disturbance in Tottenham, north London. He was detained and taken naked to hospital.

Metropolitan Police chiefs are particularly worried about a rise in the number of violent incidents involving people with drug and mental health problems.

The Met is considering plans to set up several specialist mobile emergency units that

BY JASON BENNETTO

Crime Correspondent

can be sent to the scene of an incident. The units are likely to include a police paramedic or health worker. Scotland Yard also wants to video more of the controversial cases so that the film can be used as evidence in inquests and civil claims.

The proposals were disclosed yesterday by Sir Paul Condon, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, who said that a police group headed by Denis O'Connor, Assistant Commissioner, was set up earlier this week after the death of Mr Sylvester. The use of excessive and inappropriate restraint has been criticised at a number of cases.

An inquest jury decided on Wednesday that businessman Nathan Delahanty, who had 52 injuries on his body, died partly as a result of being restrained by police in south-west London.

In July last year, it was disclosed yesterday that the Met's internal complaints unit is to re-examine the case to see whether any charges should be brought against the officers involved. Sir Paul said any rapid response team – which would be the first of its kind in the world – could help to deal with the "hundreds" of 999 calls the Met receives every year that relate to people with behavioural problems.

He said he was particularly concerned about cases involving cocaine users who have died after a violent physical reaction to being restrained by the police. He said: "We need to have a long, hard look at the way we deal with vulnerable people on the streets."

"It's becoming harder and harder for police officers to know how to deal with these people," Sir Paul added. "We have become the front line for care in the community."

MoD settles Wren sex case

A FORMER WREN who won a sexual harassment case against a Royal Navy officer nicknamed "Commander Underpants" has settled her case against the MoD, it emerged yesterday.

Nicola Rushton, 20, was expected to attend a further hearing in Exeter, Devon, today for the level of compensation to be decided. But the tribunal office said the case had been settled. No further details were available.

Miss Rushton, from Plympton, Devon, claimed she was driven out of the Navy by the behaviour of Lieutenant Commander David Bellingham aboard HMS *Coventry*.

The 6ft 4in officer – who wore "Jingle Bells" musical underpants – chased her round the quarter deck wearing a Santa Claus hat, she claimed, and subjected her to a number of incidents of sexual harassment.

Lt Cdr Bellingham, 32, now serving with HMS *Monneau*, was fined £2,000, severely reprimanded and stripped of his seniority by a court martial.

Miss Rushton, now working as a car valet, said she had regained none of the four stone she lost as a result of her ordeal. She had signed on for 22 years but was dismissed after 20 months as being "temporally unsuitable".

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This fox was reared for a Yorkshire hunt to one end ... to be killed for pleasure

From "The Independent", 26 June, 1998

Hunt 'is luring foxes for the kill'

BY KIM SENGUPTA

ONE OF THE country's leading foxhounds, accused last year of trapping fox cubs for hunting, faces a new investigation after allegations that an artificial earth was found on its land.

Less than eight months ago the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals rescued a pair of three-month-old cubs from an underground cage on the Sissington Hunt's land.

The RSPCA dropped the prosecution of the Sissington last month because it said it did not have enough evidence. The hunt masters denied they knew the cubs had been trapped.

Now the RSPCA is carrying out another inquiry after photographs and video film were produced, allegedly showing evidence of an artificial earth in the same area.

Artificial earths are not illegal. But the rules of the Masters of Fox Hounds Association states: "Foxhunting as a sport is the hunting of the fox in his wild and natural state with a pack of hounds. Nothing must be done which, in any way, compromises this rule."

Animal rights campaigners say trapping foxes to be let loose for hounds undermines the argument of blood sport supporters that hunting is an essential form of pest control.

The photographs of an earth were first said to have been taken in 1997. Video footage apparently shot earlier this month is said to show the earth was still there.

The League Against Cruel Sports, whose undercover in-

vestigators discovered the captive fox cubs, are demanding closure of the Sissington Hunt.

They intend to organise a demonstration in the area at the weekend. Steve Rackett, one of the campaigners, said:

"It is clear this hunt is encouraging fox numbers. The Sissington has been involved in other trouble, and it really is time for it to be closed down."

On Boxing Day last year, hounds from the hunt killed a cat in a garden in Kirkby-

moorside. Owner Joan Salmon and her children failed to save her pet. She accused the hunt of being arrogant and failing to apologise.

A month earlier, Ryedale District Council ordered the hunt to remove an incinerator, used for animal carcasses, which it said had been causing air pollution.

Posters have begun to appear in villages in the area, put up, it is said, by local farmers, about the hunt. One shows a cat

lying on its back with legs up in the air and the caption: "Latest from Sissington pantomime productions, puss in bits".

John Shaw, one of the joint masters of the Sissington, referred inquiries to the Countryside Alliance. John Haigh, for the Alliance, said: "We do not oppose an RSPCA inquiry, but we would like to point out that any photographs or video shots must have been gathered by the master of the Masters of Fox Hounds Association, and the hunt was cleared."

"Artificial earths aren't there to bring in foxes but just to encourage them to stay in the area. The reason we have the healthiest fox population in Europe in this country is because of hunting."

"As far as the discovery of the fox cubs is concerned, we are, of course, totally opposed to keeping foxes in cages, but there was an investigation into the matter by the Masters of Fox Hounds Association, and the hunt was cleared."

Last night James Holt, the chairman of the Sissington Hunt said: "As far as I know, at this moment there is no second artificial earth at Muscoates Whin where they say it was found. And anyway, even if there was I don't know what the fuss is about."

Mr Holt's ex-wife, Annabel Holt, a former huntswoman, is now a campaigner against blood sports and intends to set up a register of landowners opposed to hunting.

BY CLARE GARNER

THE ONLY blessing bestowed on most animals is: "For what we are about to receive, may the Lord make us truly thankful." But next month a book of services especially for animals, including a burial service, healing liturgy, and Eucharistic prayers, is to be published.

The 14 liturgies have been compiled by the Rev Professor Andrew Linzey, a fellow of Mansfield College, Oxford, where he holds the world's first post in Christian Theology and Animal Welfare. His latest book, *Animal Rites*, is dedicated to "Barney, still wagging his tail in heaven".

Many churches now have animal-blessing services, particularly around St Francis's Day on 4 October, but there is no authorised liturgy for animals. Dr Linzey hopes the Church will take up his suggestions.

"Imagine you are a parish priest and a parishioner comes to you and says their much-loved companion - their pet - has died," he said. "I don't think it's a feasible Christian response to say: 'Put it out with the garbage without a prayer.'"

Dr Linzey has written a rite for healing, which can include the laying on of hands and the use of holy oil with prayer; a liturgy for a vigil for animals suffering exploitation from human beings; and litanies for the protection of such animals.



HOME NEWS/5

Prayer book for pets is launched

BY CLARE GARNER

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MEPs want ban on battery hens within 10 years

BY STEPHEN CASTLE
in Brussels

EUROMPs yesterday demanded the abolition of all cages for battery hens by 2009 in a move which increased the political pressure on European leaders to introduce new animal welfare measures.

By a two thirds majority, MEPs called for a total ban on the cages, going well beyond the more limited measures proposed by the European Commission to increase their minimum size.

Nick Brown, the Agriculture Minister, is committed to press-

ing for the phasing out of cages for battery hens but argues that the UK cannot afford to act unilaterally.

Philip Lymbery, Campaigns Director for Compassion in World Farming, said it was "a tremendous day for animal welfare", adding: "The Council of Ministers will take the final decision but they will find it very hard to ignore this ringing endorsement from the European Parliament for the ban on battery hen cages."

Although the vote is not

binding it marks a significant escalation of the Europe-wide campaign to improve the plight of factory-farmed animals.

Campaigners will now concentrate their efforts on the Council of Agriculture Ministers, which has the power to introduce a ban throughout the 15 EU nations.

Nick Brown, the Agriculture Minister, is committed to press-

ing for the phasing out of cages for battery hens but argues that the UK cannot afford to act unilaterally.

He dismissed the argument that the move would result in a big price hike, adding that the differential in production costs between battery and free-range eggs is about 9p a box.

Yesterday's vote is a compromise for the European Commission, which had called for an increase in the size of battery hen cages from a 450 square centimetre minimum floor area to 800 square centimetres by 2009. One of its arguments is that cages provide

sanctuary for some vulnerable hens from attack by others.

A spokesman for the Commission said yesterday that reforms must be accompanied by global rules on standards to stop cheap imports flooding the market. He added: "In the absence of them we would be making our producers uncompetitive at great social cost to rural Europe."

In October 1998 the independent Scientific Veterinary Committee gave valuable am-

munition to campaigners by pointing to the defects of the battery cage system, in particular the small available area and lack of stimulus. It also noted negative elements of alternatives, including the risk of feather pecking and cannibalism.

MEPs agreed with the Commission that a 10-year phase-in period for changes is necessary to allow farmers to adapt in view of the fact that 93 per cent of eggs consumed in the EU are battery farmed. However they

scrubbed the Commission's proposal by voting for a complete ban by the 2009 deadline.

Mark Wats, Labour MEP for Kent East, and author of the successful amendment calling for a ban, said: "It is a myth that consumers will not buy free-range eggs.

The fact is that 89 per cent of the British public believe keeping hens in small cages is cruel and almost half now buy barn or free-range eggs. Changing from battery to free-range eggs would cost the average consumer less than 2p a year."

Robert Sturdy, Conservative MEP for Cambridgeshire, warned that abolition of cages must be accompanied by legal moves to block cheap imports. "Consumers will decide which eggs to buy on price as long as they are safe," he said. "It is not realistic to expect them to pay 25 per cent more for eggs that are free-range. We must make sure EU farmers do not suffer as a result of cheap imports."

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Cabinet vows to scrap Tory labour laws

THE GOVERNMENT registered its determination to scrap years of Thatcherite labour laws yesterday, granting unions legislation on compulsory recognition and new rights to millions of employees.

Union leaders clashed over the detailed provisions of the Employment Relations ("Fairness at Work") Bill, but ministers seem to have largely resisted employer attempts to water down the proposals.

The Government was keen to emphasise the "family-friendly" elements of the proposed law, which will include maternity leave of 18 weeks for all employees, benefiting 85,000 women. Maternity leave of 40 weeks will be enjoyed after one year's employment, rather than two years, covering 50,000 more mothers.

Under pressure from employers, ministers withdrew plans to remove any compensation limit for unfair dismissal. Instead, it will increase from £12,000 to £50,000. If a company refuses to reinstate a sacked worker it rises to £64,700.

But employer groups said yesterday the Bill was unnecessary and unwelcome. Ruth Lea, head of policy at the Institute of Directors, said: "The whole notion of compulsory trade union recognition is still unacceptable to us." Many of the family-friendly measures would be a burden on industry, particularly small companies, she added.

The Department of Trade and Industry has made few major concessions on union recognition to the Confederation of British Industry and New Labour hawks in the Downing Street Policy Unit.

Trade unionists believe the membership and rules of en-

BY BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

NEW RIGHTS AT WORK

- Extension of maternity leave to 18 weeks, in line with maternity pay
- 40 weeks' maternity leave after one year's employment, instead of two
- Three months' parental leave, including adoptive parents
- Right to return to job, or "suitable alternative"
- Time off for domestic emergencies
- Compensation of up to £64,700 for unfair dismissal
- Rights to compulsory union recognition where there are more than 20 employees if they want it
- Shield against prejudice for union membership, or non-membership
- A ban on "blacklisting" of trade unionists
- Right to be represented in disciplinary and serious grievance hearings
- Protection against unfair sacking for those involved

gagement of the Central Arbitration Committee, which will police the law, will have a substantial impact. Stephen Byers, Secretary of State at the DTI, said the proposals constituted "fairness not favours. I don't see the Bill acting as a recruiting agent for the unions," he said.

It is no job of a Labour government to be the Fifth Cavalry: rushing over the hill to save unions from declining membership."

Under the proposals, unions

will win compulsory recognition if they win a majority in a ballot representing at least 40 per cent of the relevant workforce. Unions with 50 per cent membership will normally be awarded automatic bargaining rights.

The provisions are unlikely to lead to wholesale unionisation – less than a quarter of workers are union members – but they could have a particular impact in some industries such as the service sector and newspapers. Unions have a "hit list" of big companies where they believe they can win a negotiating agreement.

Even where unions are not recognised, employees will have the right to be accompanied and represented by a union official in disciplinary and serious grievance hearings where legal rights are at issue. Until now, in some workplaces their representatives have been discouraged, or even banned.

Mr Byers said the Bill would fulfil the Government's manifesto commitments to provide for the first time all employees with "decent minimum standards", and the proposals would usher in a new era of co-operation between workers and employers.

Ian McCartney, Minister of State at the DTI, who was responsible for most of the detailed work of the Bill, said it would provide "partnership" in the workplace. "We are on the threshold of a renaissance in employment relations," he said.

John Edmonds, leader of the GMB general union, welcomed the Bill as the "first step" towards fairness at work. But he also wants vocational training to be part of the regaining agenda where unions are recognised.

THE GOVERNMENT has increased its spending on advertising by over one-third this year and is now planning to start sponsoring or making television programmes to put across its message.

The Central Office of Information, the department that co-ordinates government advertising, confirmed yesterday that it is likely to spend £80m in the year to March, compared with £59m last year.

More than £9m has been spent on promoting the "New Deal" on jobs, and £1.5m on warning businesses to get

BY PAUL McCANN
Media Editor

ready for the single European currency. A further £22m is being spent on promoting the working family tax credit, the campaign to promote awareness of pensions mis-selling, a government jobline and a child literacy campaign. An extra £50m is to be spent over the next three years to encourage people to give up smoking.

A spokesman for the COI said yesterday that the Government's advertising expenditure fluctuates depending on

the stage in the parliamentary cycle: "It's not like the Government is a factory which produces a steady stream of products to be promoted. There is ongoing work, like the 'Kill Your Speed' campaign, but then there are things that rely on the Government's programme."

It was also revealed yesterday that the Government is looking for a specialist sponsorship agency to allow it to sponsor radio and television programmes, and even fund programmes that promote its campaigns. Samantha Mercer, head of sponsorship at the COI,

told *Marketing Week* magazine: "We are looking at sponsorship propositions for government departments. It could involve making a programme about the life of a young recruit in the Army."

The Government is likely to use sponsorship to support non-controversial issues such as the campaign against drink-driving and the promotion of organ donation for transplant surgery.

The current administration has been described as the most "advertising literate" government ever to hold office. Min-

isters are increasingly demanding to have a say on the appointment of advertising agencies as well as approval of campaigns. Industry experts attribute the Government's interest to the Labour Party's conversion to advertising during its long period in opposition.

The 1998-99 budget for advertising is the Government's biggest for seven years. The last patch of very high spending coincided with the Conservatives' privatisation programme.

Government adverts to cost £80m

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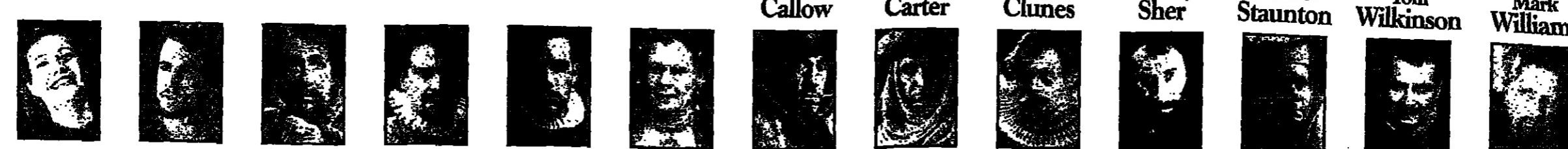
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'Access is denied to Britons in Yemen'

BY PATRICK COCKBURN
in Aden

GHALAIN is the stepson of Abu Hanifa al Masri - the militant Islamic sheikh from Finsbury Park, north London - and Mr Ahmed is believed by the Yemeni authorities to belong to Mr Masri's group, the Supporters of the Sharia Islamic Law. During the trial Mr Ahmed said: "They have been treating us like animals."

Dr Sadiq Alami a GP from Manchester, who specialises in treating the after-effects of torture, expected to be allowed into Aden central prison after the judge in charge of the case said that a foreign medical specialist could be present while a Yemeni doctor examined the men. But Dr Alami said yesterday: "It does not look good. Everything the judge promised has been retracted."

At first, the prosecutor had seemed willing to let him see the group, arrested in Aden on 24 December, but later changed his mind. Dr Alami added: "If they have nothing to hide why are they doing this?"

Dr Alami said that Sirmad Ahmed, 21, and Mohsin Ghailain, 18, both students, appeared to have been singled out for especially harsh treatment. They told family members of other prisoners who visited them after the first day of their trial, that they had both been "tapped naked and sexually abused. They said their thumbs were pressed to a metal bar for 20 seconds at a time" and they were given electric shocks.

The investigators may have focused on the two because Mr

Heseltine tells Blair: join euro

BY ANDREW GRICE
AND STEPHEN CASTLE

things may happen. Public opinion might move, a whole range of people might start arguing the pro case," he said.

But he warned Mr Blair that the campaign on "the most overarching issue of our time" would have no credibility unless the Prime Minister led it. If he failed to do so, he would be "guilty of the abdication of British self-interest".

Mr Heseltine dismissed as "incomprehensible" Mr Hague's policy of ruling out British membership in this Parliament and the next.

Tomorrow Mr Blair will try to boost his European credentials with other EU leaders by signing up to Labour's most positive European policy statement so far at a meeting of socialist party leaders in Vienna.

They will approve a joint manifesto for the European Parliament elections in June, calling for economic and tax coordination. It also unreservedly backs the single currency, and goes beyond Labour's position in several areas.

IN BRIEF

Police get longer to question man

DETECTIVES WERE yesterday given another 36 hours to question a man aged 71 over a series of alleged serious sex offences in the 1970s. Sidney Cooke was arrested on Tuesday at Yeovil by Thames Valley Police. West Berkshire magistrates granted detectives a further 36 hours to question him at Newbury police station.

Whites 'likeliest race victims'

WHITE PEOPLE are more likely to be victims of racially motivated crime than those from ethnic minorities in Bradford, West Yorkshire, according to a police survey released yesterday. It found 52 per cent of race victims in the city were white, 29 per cent Pakistani, 9 per cent black, 4 per cent Indian and 2 per cent Bangladeshi.

GP to stand trial for two murders

A family doctor who is charged with killing eight of his women patients was committed for trial for two murders. Harold Shipman, 52, of Row Cross Green, Mottram, Tameside, is to appear at Manchester Crown Court on 1 March for a plea and directions hearing on all the charges.

Ginger signs up BBC's Zoë
BBC RADIO claimed victory in its breakfast radio battle with Chris Evans when, a week before listening figures came out, his company, Ginger Productions, signed Zoë Ball to host an entertainment programme for Channel 4.

Feud over toy lands brothers in court



Paul Tatton showing his rare Thunderbird Two model, which he claims his brother tried to get hold of 10 years ago

Page One

BY JOHN DAVISON

A BITTER and long-running dispute was aired in court yesterday after a police officer arrested his own brother for swearing at him after they clashed over a rare and valuable Thunderbirds toy.

Paul Tatton, 39, appeared on a charge of threatening behaviour but Nottingham magistrates dismissed the case after hearing of the feud. Mr Tatton is now planning to sue his younger brother PC Roy Lewis-Tatton, for false arrest.

The court was told that the feud started 10 years ago after Mr Tatton accused his brother, a toy collector, of trying to get Mr Tatton's young son to swap a Dinky toy of Thunderbird Two, worth about £200, for a cheap Action Man. The men had barely spoken since, until an incident outside Mr Tatton's home in Bilborough, Nottinghamshire, last October which culminated in the arrest.

PC Lewis-Tatton, of Long Eaton, Derbyshire, told the court that he arrested his brother because Mr Tatton had struck his own son, Carl, now 18, and threatened himself and a fellow officer. But Mr Tatton said: "I think Roy was using his position as a police officer to have a go at me about previous family feuds. I can't see us being reconciled after this."

Nottinghamshire Police confirmed that Mr Tatton's arrest was being investigated after an official complaint.

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Tiny figleaf covers up the Tories' rampant manhood

I ASSUME the Chancellor had a bad-tempered breakfast listening to BBC Radio's *Today* programme as John Maples cut the Treasury as the only government department that had failed to respond to questions about ministerial travel.

The trip to the House, made for reasons of presentation on the Treasury tandem (cost to the taxpayer 0.17p for inner-tube depreciation) clearly hadn't improved his humour either, because he arrived on the front bench in a singularly stroppy mood, even by his own high standards of unprovoked belligerence. The embarrassment in question never actually materialised

incidentally, a half-hearted attempt by John Wilkinson being quickly seen off by collective face-pulling from the front bench and a historical footnote from Dennis Skinner, who reminded the House that he was old enough to remember the time when Tories demanded to know why Labour ministers hadn't flown in Concorde.

But by this time everybody was in a right old mood anyway - the tone of general irascibility having been set from the start by the Chancellor and his equally aggressive lieutenant Alan Milburn. Both men reacted to every intervention as if someone had deliberately nudged a pint of beer into their laps. Whatever the subject of the question - and there was at least one uncomfortably awkward one from Francis Maude - they rapidly reverted to taunting the Opposition. Occasionally Labour backbenchers would offer a bit of mollifying sycophancy, as if to defuse the situation, but it rarely worked. Mr Brown would look momentarily soothed by the flattery and then struggle free to throw another wild punch.

This wasn't just a matter of wayward testosterone, either, because the Treasury's three frontbench women were determined to match their boss blow for condescending

blow. Dawn Primarolo went first, like a snooty cabin attendant for a budget airline, the enunciation lessons slowly beginning to unpeel as the passengers got increasingly rowdy. She was the first member to get a warning, after suggesting that the Opposition's selective amnesia about their own record "verges on dishonesty". There was a scandalised "oooh" from Tory members, but her reluctant apology didn't calm things down.

As she sat down after a particularly vacuous evasion, the phrase "stupid woman" sang out from the Conservative benches. Now it was Labour's turn to complain to Miss. One of the rough boys had said a bad word. Miss, who hadn't heard the insult, announced that no one was going for playtime until she

found out what had been said and by whom. Ms Primarolo mouthed the offending phrase silently at her, like one of Les Dawson's northern women negotiating her way past an unmentionable ailment. "Was it Mr [Nicolas] Gibb?" Miss asked sternly, after Labour smirches had fingered the miscreant. "Believe you insulted half the population of this country," Miss continued regally. "As I am one of them I would ask you to withdraw the remark."

After that a certain air of sexual antagonism dominated the proceedings. This was hardly surprising as the Tory Treasury team is entirely male, while women are

unusually well represented on the government side.

Indeed Barbara Roche decided to abandon economic policy altogether in favour of female solidarity. "Not one woman member," she said scornfully, gesturing across at the opposition benches. Unfortunately she had missed the arrival of Julie Kirkbride, who had slipped in quietly, effectively disabling her warhead while it was still in the air. As a man Tory MPs turned to jab their fingers proudly at Ms Kirkbride, who had preserved their modesty at the very last moment - a tiny and barely adequate figleaf for the party's rampant manhood.

Maude claims Brown wants to join ERM

THE CHANCELLOR Gordon Brown was accused of wanting to take Britain back into the exchange-rate mechanism yesterday when Tories claimed he was dodging the question of whether he planned to shadow the euro.

But Mr Brown made clear during Question Time that, under the Amsterdam treaty, entry into the ERM before joining the single currency was voluntary. "We have no intention of rejoining the ERM," he said.

Francis Maude, the shadow Chancellor, said exchange-rate stability was necessary for two years before Britain could enter the single currency.

That would require a change of the remit of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee because it would have to pursue interest rates in line with the 11 countries presently in the currency union.

Mr Maude said stringent measures to achieve convergence were necessary now if the Government intended to join the euro soon after the next general election, probably in 2002.

MONETARY UNION

BY SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter

Quoting an article by Gwyn Davies, a senior adviser to Mr Brown and a partner at Goldman Sachs, Mr Maude said: "Mr Davies said at some point the Bank of England will have to be told to shadow the euro instead of inflation for a two-year period to stabilise exchange rates ahead of joining. Do you agree with that?"

The Chancellor, replying, attacked the Tories for being "obsessed" with the ERM because of the debacle on Black Monday 1992 when Britain was forced out of the mechanism.

"When you are at the Treasury as a minister, your government took us in and we had to leave ignominiously as a result of your mistakes," he told Mr Maude.

Mr Brown said he had outlined the five convergence criteria in 1997 and he would not join the single currency unless it was in the British national interest to do so.

In a briefing to parliamentary journalists, Mr Maude later attacked the Chancellor and accused him of "ducking a key question".

"The condition for entry to have exchange rate stability is there for very good reasons. For Britain to join the euro without our economy being aligned with the Continent would be disastrous both for Britain and the euro area."

"That is why there is a treaty obligation to shadow the euro for two years."

The uncertainty surrounding Mr Brown's policy could potentially destroy the credibility of the Bank's anti-inflationary policy, Mr Maude added.

"So either Gordon Brown thinks this stability will occur by magic, or he is hiding his true intention to force the pound to shadow the euro. If this is what he intends to do he should say so and spell out the consequences."

"He should tell us whether he is intending to direct his whole economic policy to abolishing the pound," he said.



Sarah Wood, Lindsey Calon and Elizabeth Howard had tea at 10 Downing Street yesterday after an invitation from Cherie Blair, who asked their MP Edward Garnier (C, Harborough) to bring them along Fiona Hanson

New site to cost £12m for each MP

PARLIAMENT

BY SARAH SCHAEFER

THE NEW Westminster building for MPs and their staff will cost more per user than any other building in Britain, it was claimed yesterday.

An article in the trade magazine *Building* says that Portcullis House, at the bottom of Whitehall, will cost £1.2m per MP. A breakdown of costs for the £250m project, due to open in spring 2001, found that furniture costs, including English oak tables and chairs, will come to £14,761 per member.

Plants for a restaurant in a covered courtyard will cost £200,000, with fixtures and fittings adding another £500,000. Sandstone columns will cost another £3m, and £600,000 will go on office chairs and blinds and windows will cost £1.2m.

The building is to be clad in blast-proof bronze at a cost of £30m, and the roof will add another £13m. Legal, architectural and engineering fees add £12m says *Building*.

The luxury building is designed to provide offices and conference rooms for more than 200 backbenchers and their staff, who cannot be housed in the Palace of Westminster. It has already run into problems after concrete "stitches" built into its sides were found to be too weak.

Blair praises New Deal as national jobs crusade

TONY BLAIR hailed the Government's flagship New Deal policy as a "national crusade" yesterday despite new figures showing that more than half of its trainees ended back up on the dole.

The Prime Minister said he was "immensely proud" of the scheme as he revealed that it had passed the landmark figure of 100,000 participants.

Yet the statistics also showed that 53 per cent of leavers from the New Deal's full-time education and training option failed to secure unsubsidised work. The programme uses cash from the £5.2bn wind-

EMPLOYMENT

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

fall levy on privatised utilities to put 18 to 24-year-olds in jobs, training or work experience.

Labour pledged in its manifesto to use the New Deal to take 250,000 people under 25 off benefit and help them into work. But the Tories seized on the figures to claim that the policy had failed miserably and was a means of massaging the unemployment statistics.

Damian Green, the shadow Employment minister, said the cost per job of the New Deal

was £11,000, a rate much more expensive than any previous "job creation" scheme.

"The most disturbing fact is that more than half of those who sign up for education and training for the New Deal still do not go into unsubsidised jobs. This is a serious blow to Labour's flagship policy," he said.

"How can they claim this is a sensible use of taxpayers' money? With a job lost every 10 minutes and the New Deal increasingly showing itself as an enormous failure, this Government is betraying the young unemployed."

Earlier, Mr Blair said the

New Deal had already halved the rate of youth unemployment since the Government came into office and offered real hope for youngsters facing long-term unemployment. The Prime Minister was joined by David Blunkett, Secretary of State for Education and Employment, as he revealed that 40,000 employers had signed up and 44,000 youngsters had gone into unsubsidised jobs.

"I believe it is a sort of quiet youth revolution in the making and is literally transforming the prospects of thousands of youngsters up and down the country," Mr Blair said.

QUESTIONS

AND ANSWERS

Uranium riddle at Dounreay

AN INVESTIGATION has confirmed a quantity of weapons-grade uranium was unaccounted for at the Dounreay nuclear plant in Scotland, the Energy minister, John Battle, disclosed.

Digital shares

RADIO GROUPS will be allowed to hold unlimited shareholdings in up to five companies or consortia with digital licences, Culture minister Janet Anderson announced.

Ethical export

THE AMOUNT of taxpayers' money that was used to help military equipment exports to Indonesia dropped sharply last year after pressure on the Government to comply with its "ethical foreign policy", the Defence Secretary, George Robertson, said.

The Prime Minister's Official Spokesman also tried to quell

Backbenchers query 'high-life'

MINISTERS WERE warned yesterday that their own backbenchers were "not very happy" about suggestions they were "living the high life" at taxpayers' expense.

The outburst by Dennis Skinner, the MP for Bolsover, during Question Time followed several reports that Jack Cunningham, the cabinet enforcer, and other ministers had taken the Concorde to ministerial meetings although cheaper flights would have been available. There have also been allegations of ministers staying in luxury hotels and dining out.

"Some of us on this side of the House are not very happy about the way in which people want to live the high life, fly Concorde and the rest of it," Mr Skinner said.

The spokesman indicated that the Government would in future refuse to answer questions about travel arrangements because it wasted valuable time. "This is something we are not going to play along with."

Francis Maude, the shadow Chancellor, said it was an "outrage to treat such information as a state secret". Tory sources indicated they would be writing to the National Audit Office to ask for an inquiry.

THE HOUSE



Pensions claim

FRANK FIELD, the former social security minister, attacked the Government's pension reforms as "appalling" because they would fail to reduce significantly the numbers of pensioners on means-tested benefits.

While at present one in three retired in such circumstances, that proportion would only fall to one in four in 15 years' time if the reforms were implemented.

Speaker insulted

THE TORY MP Nicolas Gibb was rebuked by the Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, after he called the Paymaster-General a "stupid woman". She told him that half the population of this country about stupid women. I therefore would like an apology from you because I happen to be one of them."

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Opera House cuts prices in 'new era'

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

THE ROYAL Opera House spelt out its masterplan for becoming the people's opera yesterday. In a big change of ethos to respond to the criticisms and crises of recent years, ticket prices will be reduced, the new House at Covent Garden is to be open all day and there will be weekly free lunchtime concerts.

The ROH also announced its new programme yesterday. It will include a festival to mark Covent Garden's reopening in November with concert performances from Plácido Domingo, Angela Gheorghiu and Roberto Alagna. It will also stage new specially commissioned ballets choreographed by William Forsythe, Twyla Tharp and Ashley Page among others, followed by a more traditional season of opera and ballet. The Royal Ballet will also perform *The Nutcracker* on Millennium Eve.

Michael Kaiser, the American executive director brought in to turn round the fortunes of the House in central London, said it was "the start of a new era". He added that the House's current deficit of £14m would definitely be cleared by March 2000.

The ROH, which has had a massive uplift in its public subsidy from £14m to £20m a year, will reduce its highest ticket price from £250 to £150. Seat prices will be lower on Fridays and Saturdays than the rest of the week. Tickets will start as



Singers Plácido Domingo



and Angela Gheorghiu

low as £6 and more than half the house will be priced at under £45 even on Monday to Thursday evenings. The top price for a Royal Ballet performance will be £60, with over half the tickets costing less than £30. Formerly, the best Royal Ballet seats were £70.

Asked whether a top price of £150 for opera did not still seem a lot for a publicly funded institution, Mr Kaiser replied: "On Friday and Saturday nights the top price will be £85. In over half the House prices are £40 or less and most people buy at the mid-price. There will now be a much more unified audience. We have a very full and very rich programme. We are offering these things at prices that are affordable, and we are re-opening on time."

"The new studio theatre excites me most with its weekly free lunchtime concerts. I think

tory for tours, meals and drinks ■ Enhanced educational programmes with lectures, music workshops and dance clubs plus the usual school matinees ■ Daily use of the new studio theatre seating 420 people for lunchtime recitals, education and community events ■ A new ballet studio space seating 200 with workshops and small-scale performances programmed by Royal Ballet principal dancer Deborah Bull.

But despite the optimism at Covent Garden yesterday the House is still without an artistic director to work alongside Mr Kaiser. Two Americans, Sarah Billinghurst of the Metropolitan Opera in New York and the freelance director Francesca Zambello, have been approached but have turned the job down. Mr Kaiser said the board was "actively seeking" an artistic director.



The Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, which will hold a festival in November to mark its reopening

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Drugs testing at workplace 'inaccurate'

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

uretics products that can sometimes lead to the drug being so diluted it is undetectable.

Drug testing is expanding in a rapid but haphazard manner in workplaces. The UK Standing Committee to Develop Guidelines for Workplace Drug Tests will publish a report in July designed to establish a standard blueprint.

Mike Goodman, of the drug advice charity Release, said more people were contacting his organisation over fears about drug testing than any other issue, including the effects of Ecstasy.

He said: "The number one question by a million miles is 'How long does cannabis stay in the system?'"

Other clients had said they had tested positive for opiates after eating poppy seeds on French bread.

Earlier, the UK Anti-Drugs Co-ordinator, Keith Hellawell, said drug testing in the workplace should be an "integral part" of a company's health and safety policy, and should also include alcohol.

Custody fight for battered chimp

BY LINUS GREGORIADIS

A CUSTODY BATTLE over an orphaned chimpanzee abused by Mary Chipperfield began yesterday when the animal's new guardians launched a national campaign to keep her.

Trudy has spent the last nine months with a surrogate monkey family at a sanctuary in Dorset. But Chipperfield, convicted on 12 counts of cruelty to the animal at Andover, Hampshire, says the chimpanzee she calls her "baby" should be returned because it is owned neither by her nor her husband, Roger Cawley, but their company, Mary Chipperfield Promotions Limited.

Video footage at the trial showed Chipperfield beating the chimp with a riding crop while trying to put her to bed in a tiny box. Trudy, who lived alone, was fed scraps and spent up to 14 hours a day in the box.

Trudi's new guardian, Jim Cronin, director of Monkey World in Wareham, said yes-



Chipperfield: Says Trudy should be returned to her

terday: "I have launched a defence fund to keep Trudy with her family. I have been overwhelmed by the public's reaction, we have had them crying down the phone all morning.

Animal Defenders, the group that secretly shot the videos, is also campaigning to keep Trudy at the sanctuary.

Widdecombe: I pay to see my doctor

THE SHADOW Health secretary, Ann Widdecombe, said yesterday she pays to see her own GP, prompting government allegations that the Tories would privatise family doctor services.

"If people want to pay their GP they should be allowed to," she said. "One of the things that gets me in the health service is that under this Government there is the view that there is something immoral in paying for your own health."

The incoming Labour Government looked at the possibility of charging a small fee, such as £5 per visit, to see the GP, as part of a thorough review of NHS charges, but ruled out the idea last year.

The BMA said it was rare for patients to choose to pay their GPs. "There are some GPs – not very many – who are in private practice and some who have private patients but this is not a big part of the NHS."

"There are people who are philosophically disposed towards private care who choose to pay but it is a small part of the health service."

Patients who chose to pay usually did so separately for each private consultation. Some busy ones pay to see GPs at the time they choose, rather than wait in the NHS surgery.

There are moves by private insurance companies to set up groups of GPs operating as private family doctors in return for fixed fees.

Sources close to Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, said Labour would use her remarks as a clear warning the Tories were in favour

of privatising the NHS, in spite of her denials. "The cat is out of the bag – the Tories tried to privatise the NHS when they were in government. It appears they would do so now."

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Ann Widdecombe, shadow Health secretary: 'I will pay my GP if I choose to'

Andrew Buurman

THE INDEPENDENT
Friday 29 January 1999

Bid cap

Revenue 'sorry' for doubling tax bills

BY ANDREW VERITY

"This is the last straw for many of them."

Eileen Docherty, a London-based tax agent, said: "Whoever designed these tax statements should be shot. Even people in the revenue hate them: whenever you ring up they apologise and can't work it out themselves. And they invariably agree the statements are very poorly designed."

The apologies emerged as the revenue confirms it stands to net upwards of £60m from taxpayers in fines for failing to get tax returns in by the deadline of midnight on Sunday.

Last year, more than 570,000 taxpayers missed the deadline, each attracting a fine of £100. A further 400,000 missed the second deadline of 31 July, giving the revenue a windfall of approximately £107m in fines.

Officials added that because of the tight timetable, the flawed statements would have to go out as they were.

The letter says the problem has affected "around a quarter of statements issued".

Taxpayers are being asked to work out themselves how much they owe – in spite of the revenue's guarantee that it would do this for taxpayers if returns were submitted on time.

Chas Roy Chowdry, senior technical officer at the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, says: "These incorrect tax demands have sown endless confusion. The revenue made a simple mistake – they just doubled what taxpayers should owe."

"As far as most people are concerned, instead of paying £1,000, they are being asked to pay £2,000. In an economic downturn, when the self-employed are in hard times anyway, they still have to find funds which they hadn't been expecting to pay."

DEBORAH ORR

Labour's attitude is a classic example of the new cocaine socialism

IN THE FRIDAY REVIEW PAGE 5

Amid an outcry from tax agents, the revenue apologised and commissioned a report on how the problem occurred. Sources close to the revenue officials describe the report as "damning". But it has never been published.

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THE INDEPENDENT
Friday 29 January 1999

HOME NEWS/11

Surgeon shortage hits transplants

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

TRANSPLANT SURGERY has lost its glamour and its future is threatened by a shortage of donor organs and growing disaffection among young surgeons, specialists said yesterday.

Despite advances that have made transplantation the best treatment for most patients whose organs have failed, the supply of organs is declining and the specialty is facing a crisis, the Royal College of Surgeons warned.

The work has made Sir Magdi Yacoub, the heart transplant pioneer, an international celebrity, but new surgeons are put off by the heavy demands, which include frequent all night and weekend operating.

Sir Peter Morris, professor of surgery at Oxford University, who chaired a college working party on the problems said: "The provision of organ transplantation as a service is on a knife edge. It is not seen as glamorous or as exciting as it was 20 years ago."

Almost 1,500 organs taken



Transplant surgery has lost its glamour image among young surgeons because of its poor working hours and the declining number of organ donors

Most organ transplants are carried out as emergencies after hours because of the shortage of operating theatre time and because the organs will not keep.

Robert Bosner, a cardiac transplant surgeon from Birmingham, said 98 per cent of heart and lung transplants were carried out after midnight. "There are 300 heart transplants a year and 10 to 20 per cent die on the waiting list," he said. However, thousands more could benefit from transplants if more organs and surgeons were available.

The report says transplants should be concentrated in 20 hospitals, rather than the present 24, to ensure expertise is maintained and no surgeon is on call more than one night in four rather than every other night.

There are 67 kidney transplant surgeons, 21 short of the total needed to cope with the existing workload on a one in four rota, and 22 liver transplant surgeons, 15 short of the number needed. "Consultant positions need to be made more attractive," Sir Peter said.

JL Martra

from 900 donors were transplanted in 1997 but there are more than 4,500 patients on the waiting list. Demand for organs is rising at over 3 per cent a year but the supply is failing. Fewer people die in road accidents, a

big source of organs, which are down by more than a third since the early 1980s because of safer cars and roads, and fewer die of brain haemorrhages caused by stroke, down 57 per cent since 1976, because

of improved medical care. The working party report, published yesterday, calls for a doubling in registered donors, from 5 to 10 million. Sir Peter said: "We would like to see organ donation discussed with-

in families and by the public so it becomes part of the culture. When a loved one dies the family will then ask automatically for the organs to be used."

The increased use of living donors, who can give one kidney or a part of their liver, could also go "a long way" to solving the shortage, he said.

That practice has grown in Sweden and the United States. However, the idea of an "opt out" scheme, under which people would be presumed to have consented to the removal of their organs after death, unless they had registered their opposition, was rejected. "That is a decision the public have to make," Sir Peter said.

Cancer drug may prove too costly

BY JEREMY LAURANCE

A DRUG licensed yesterday for the commonest type of brain cancer could ease the suffering of up to 2,000 people in Britain - if they can get hold of it.

Temozolamide is being described as the most important brain cancer treatment for 20 years by the Cancer Research Campaign (CRC), whose scientists discovered it.

In trials, patients have seen a sharp improvement in symptoms but its effect on survival is so far limited, extending life by about three months.

Fears were raised yesterday that some health authorities and NHS trusts might resist using the drug because of the cost - £1,000-£2,000 per month per patient.

Temozolamide is marketed under the brand name Temodal by the drug company Schering-Plough, which negotiated the worldwide rights with the CRC's commercial arm, Cancer Research Campaign Technology.

John Simmons, Schering-Plough's marketing development manager, admitted being concerned that some patients who could benefit from the drug would be denied it.

"This isn't going to be a cheap drug, and unfortunately this will restrict its availability. There will be some NHS trusts who say, 'Sorry, our budget for cancer treatment is this and we can't expand it any further,'" he said.

Professor Gordon McVie, a

study was also under way to investigate whether temozolamide could help patients with skin cancer.

Hen's eggs help girls learn about sex

BY LOUISE JURY

A HEN'S EGG is the latest recruit in the battle to stop unwanted pregnancies. Teenage girls are being encouraged to care for an egg as if it were a baby, to give them a taste of life as carer and guardian.

Dozens of schools in London are taking part in the initiative, organised by local health authorities and the Brook Advisory Centres.

Each girl is encouraged to look after an egg for a week as if it were her own baby. She prepares a carrycot, lined with tissues, which she keeps with her at all times. The girl feeds and changes the egg six times a day, by replacing the tissues, and keeps a diary of the egg's progress.

Instructions issued to pupils aged 14 and 15 at the Maria Fidelis Convent School in Camden stress that the egg must go everywhere with the girl during the exercise.

"If you go out, you may put your egg in your carrycot in your bag but remember never leave your bag unattended and don't swing your bag about as you may break the egg."

"If you break your egg you must tell someone at home and pay a pre-arranged fine

(perhaps the price of an egg) or do a household chore. Record it in your diary, stating how you broke it, how you felt about it and the reactions of the person you told. Get a new egg and continue with the exercise."

A Camden council spokeswoman said it was part of a sex education project that was often followed up by encouraging the teenagers to look after dolls simulating babies.

"We all know about the huge problem of unwanted teenage pregnancies. This is an imaginative project designed to get teenagers to really think about the consequences of unwanted pregnancies."

A Family Planning Association spokeswoman said the recent storm about teenage mothers and adoption had highlighted the problem of unplanned babies. The association planned improved and more widespread sex education.

A Brook Advisory Centre spokeswoman said the project involved schools in Camden, Islington and Southwark. Young mothers and fathers also talk in schools about the realities of being a teenage parent.

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12/HOME NEWS

Rival firms fight for failing school

A HI-TECH "millennium school" specialising in business, arts or sport is being proposed by bidders hoping to take over the first state school to be put out to tender.

Private companies will outline their aspirations for a failing comprehensive school at Guildford, Surrey, in submissions to be put to parents today.

The contractors hope to take over King's Manor School next year under ground-breaking council plans to close the comprehensive and reopen it under private management.

Three companies are in the running: Nord Anglia, a consultancy that runs a string of private schools, careers services and teacher-supply agencies; CFBT, a not-for-profit consultancy that is a major supplier of school inspectors; and 3E's Enterprises, a company set up by Kingshurst City Technology College in Solihull, West Midlands. The most controversial bidder: the American-inspired Education Partnership, has pulled out of the race, claiming English law would give it too little freedom to reform the school.

None of the bidders is proposing to inject large amounts of extra money, but all are promising to turn the comprehensive into a first-class school. The winner will reopen the school next autumn. Private contractors will hire staff and appoint governors, and will be able to earn bonuses if examination targets are met.

BY BEN RUSSELL
Education Correspondent

Nord Anglia, run by the multi-millionaire entrepreneur Kevin McNealy, proposes "The Guildford Millennium School" with a strong bias towards industry. The company pro-

poses: "The new school will be close to business and will concentrate on giving all its pupils the skills that will lead to quality employment." Staff are offered an "exciting but perhaps a little unsettling" time.

CFBT is promising a school to "develop a leading-edge specialism in the performing arts, drama or sporting arena", but concentrating on key skills, discipline and better teaching. The company's outline says: "We are not coming to you with

tempting bags of extra cash. CFBT does not believe the problems of the King's Manor school are primarily caused by the shortage of money."

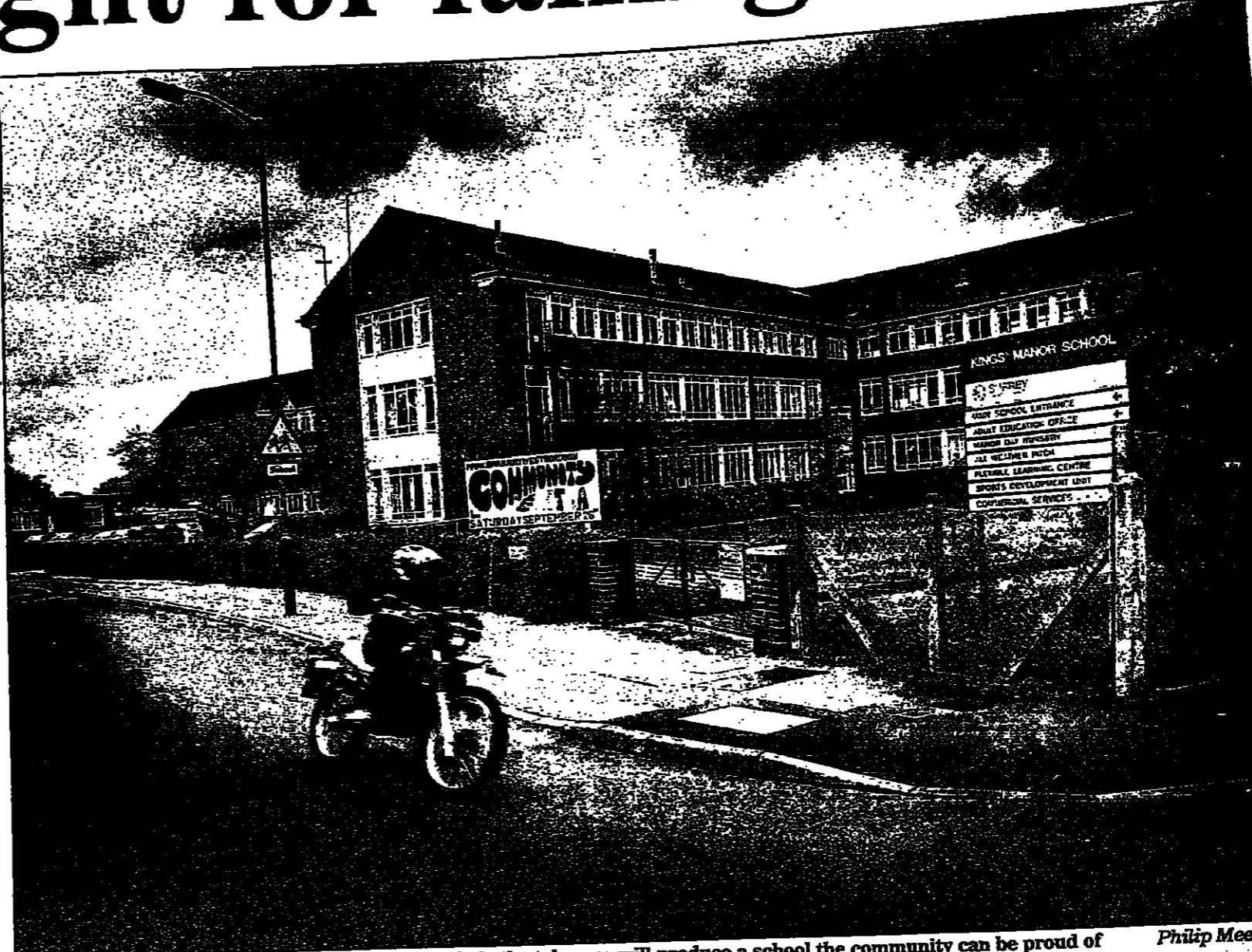
The 3E's bid promises to plough any profits from the King's Manor contract back into the school and the Kingshurst CTC. The company wants an arts college, with "students" rather than pupils, offering education to people of all ages.

King's Manor, which has places for 900 pupils but is only half full, slumped to the bottom of the Surrey league table. Only 20 per cent of pupils gained five or more good GCSEs this year.

Dr Andrew Povey, chairman of Surrey County Council's education committee, said: "They are looking at making the school something different, using technology and lengthening the day - these are all the sorts of things which are required."

But Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, accused the authority of a "woeful abandonment" of its responsibility. "I have seen worse situations, and worse schools, turned round with the help of the local authority."

Parents said their fears had been allayed by meetings with the bidders. Ben Cartwright, chairman of the King's Manor School Action Group, said: "There is a sense of optimism now that we are going to end up with a school that the community can be proud of."



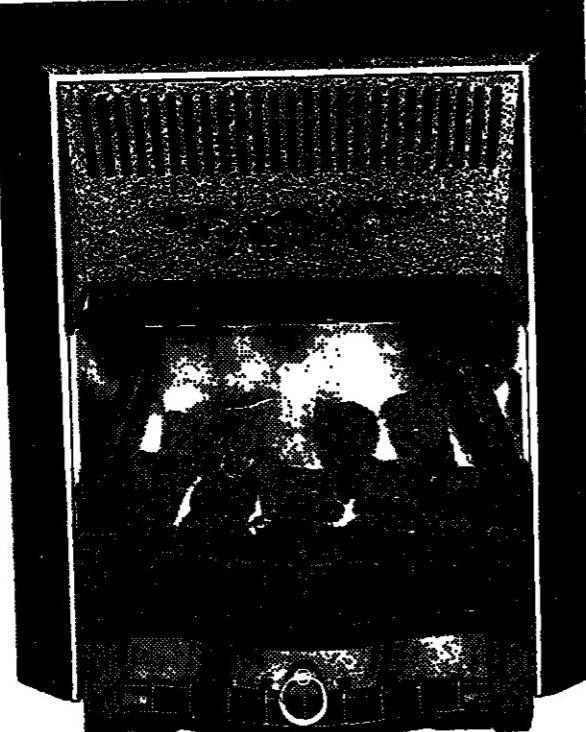
King's Manor School: Parents say they are optimistic the takeover will produce a school the community can be proud of Philip Morris

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Nato delivers final warning to Milosevic

ON THE eve of a meeting of leading powers to issue diplomatic marching orders to the warring Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo, Nato yesterday delivered a stern and final warning to President Slobodan Milosevic that it would use force if necessary to ensure its demands are met.

As fighting continued in the ravaged Serbian province, the sense grew that after a year of war in which 2,000 people have died and 300,000 lost their homes, the moment of truth is at hand.

This was "a critical turning point", Nato Secretary-General, Javier Solana, said yesterday. "The next few days will be decisive."

Speaking on the eve of today's meeting in London of foreign ministers of the six-member Contact Group, Mr Solana said he expected the conference, which comprises France, Germany, America, Italy, Britain and Russia, to issue a "political ultimatum" for a settlement, which would be followed by a specific military ultimatum from Nato.

Based on proposals worked out by the American envoy Christopher Hill, the plan due to be endorsed by the six ministers meeting at Lancaster House will summon Belgrade and the ethnic Albanians to

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

talks, perhaps as early as next week, to thrash out a deal for broad autonomy, though not full independence, for Kosovo.

It will be backed by an explicit threat by the alliance to Mr Milosevic that it stands ready at short notice to carry out airstrikes to force him to accept its demands.

These include the pull-back of Yugoslav army and police units to their levels of 12 months ago, full co-operation with the international monitors in the province, and unrestricted access for United Nations war crimes prosecutors to investigate this month's massacre of 45 ethnic Albanians at Racak.

A warning to this effect was conveyed last night to the Yugoslav President by the Norwegian ambassador, Nato's senior representative in Belgrade.

Meanwhile, the build-up of allied forces in the region continued as a Nato naval group took up position in the southern Adriatic, and hundreds of allied warplanes were on 48 hours' preparedness to strike at Yugoslavia military targets.

Adding to the pressure on Belgrade, Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General and a man usually associated with peace, not war, told the Atlantic Coun-

cil that the military threat was essential to "the combination of force and diplomacy that is the key to peace in the Balkans".

The world community should have "no illusions about the need to use force when all other means have failed", he warned.

But the outcome last night was hanging in the balance, with no certainty that either party would attend a conference, and continuing skirmishes on the ground - in one of which two ethnic Albanians were killed and two Serbian policemen wounded.

In Belgrade, a spokesman for Mr Milosevic rejected an internationally sponsored conference and ruled out talks with "terrorists".

Nor was there much sign of the Albanians settling their own feud between the political leadership under Ibrahim Rugova, and the Kosovo Liberation Army, which is waging the guerrilla war against the Serbs, and which is committed to full independence.

The formula envisaged for the talks resembles the Dayton conference of 1995, which yielded a settlement for the former Yugoslav republic of Bosnia. The talks could be held either in Austria or France.

They would begin as "proximity talks", mediated by Mr

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Wet, cold police turn blind eye to looters

By PHIL DAVISON
in Armenia, Colombia

"WE'RE HUNGRY. We're thirsty, we're desperate. No-one even gave us any water." The rain-drenched, middle-aged woman, hauling a potato sack bulging with bags of rice, soap and bottled water was screaming at an obviously frightened young policeman who half-heartedly tried to stop her running from a looted supermarket.

She was one of thousands of men, women and children, the survivors of Monday's earthquake, who lost their patience with a lack of aid and prised open the metal shutters of dozens of supermarkets and stripped them bare. So great was the hunger and desperation that it became the survival of the fittest, as men wrested stolen food, medicine or toilet paper from women. Outside one supermarket, a young man and his wheelchair were knocked over. He was trampled for a couple of minutes before being righted. Some women bartered in stolen goods. "Is that hour? I'll give you my rice for that," shouted one amid the confusion.

Police reinforcements fired their G-3 automatic rifles into the air to disperse the looters who retaliated by throwing bricks and other earthquake rubble, but eventually gave up.

Stunned by the turn of events, Colombia's president Andres Pastrana moved his government to Armenia - formerly known as La Milagrosa (the Miracle City) because of its picturesque setting - but now 70 per cent in ruins without water, electricity or communications. The mayor says the entire city centre - an area bigger than London's West End, with banks, trendy shops and restaurants - may have to be demolished.

Mr Pastrana also called in



Survivors of the earthquake looting stores in Armenia yesterday. More police and the military have been called in a bid to restore order

Mariana Bazo/Reuters

2,000 more police and military police to restore order. The local police had already been demoralised by losing their headquarters and around 20 colleagues in the quake. They, too, were wet and hungry. Mr Pastrana was said to be considering bringing in troops hardened in battle with leftist guerrillas and ruthless cocaine gangs.

The numbers of desperate

citizens of this city in what is known as Colombia's *eje cafetero* (coffee hub) because of its world-renowned crop, increased as news spread that food was available. Thousands flocked to the area on foot, in cars, on bicycles, farm lorries or tractors, causing a chaotic traffic jam in torrential rain. The police, many from the same working-class Santander barrio of the city, eventually

gave up. "In the end, it just seemed better to let them get on with it," said assistant police chief Dagoberto Garcia. "There's been too much death here already. We don't want to cause any more."

Despite a dusk-to-dawn curfew, looters moved from basic essentials to furniture and electronic goods. Small shopkeepers, wearing white armbands to recognise each other, set up vig-

ilante groups to protect their wares. Police said vandals, wielding guns or machetes, were robbing the looters.

In the town of Pereira, the sound of police sirens continued throughout yesterday as looting spread in the badly-hit working class city centre.

Price rises have added to the frustration of victims with the unscrupulous charging four times the regular price for rice

and sugar. Nor could they understand why tons of overseas aid - food, medicine and blankets - were piling up at Armenia's tiny airfield while nothing appeared to be reaching them. The Red Cross said the death toll was now just short of 500 but likely to rise several-fold since only 20 per cent of rubble had so far been cleared.

The scene in the "coliseum," or sports arena, of the Uni-

versity of Quindio (the province of which Armenia is the capital) was horrific. Several hundred decomposing bodies lay scattered, face-up, across the basketball court in rag doll positions while relatives sought for loved-ones, amid a stench far worse than a long-uncleared rubbish dump.

Several dozen bodies were dug out of the rubble yesterday, emerging bloated and covered

in dust. Despite the virtual non-stop rain, reducing the chance of survivors, many relatives did not give up hope. Spirits were lifted on Wednesday when two teenage boys, 16-year-old Daniel Acevedo and 13-year-old Jaison Lopez, were hauled from rubble almost 48 hours after the quake. Daniel said he had survived by singing hymns to himself, keeping his head warm in a crash helmet that ended up beside him and drinking his own urine using his hands as a cup.

In a park where thousands of refugees are sleeping on sodden grass with only plastic sheets as their roofs, there were moving scenes yesterday as hundreds lined up in single file to get messages to relatives elsewhere in Colombia or abroad.

Each were given 10 seconds by the local TV channel Telecafe which is also transmitted "live" to areas of the United States where many Colombians live.

Men, women and children tried to put on a brave face but many broke down as one after another gave a similar message: "Mum and dad, this is just to let you know that I'm fine. I'm in good health and still trust in God. I have nowhere to live because the house fell down into the street but I'll be alright."

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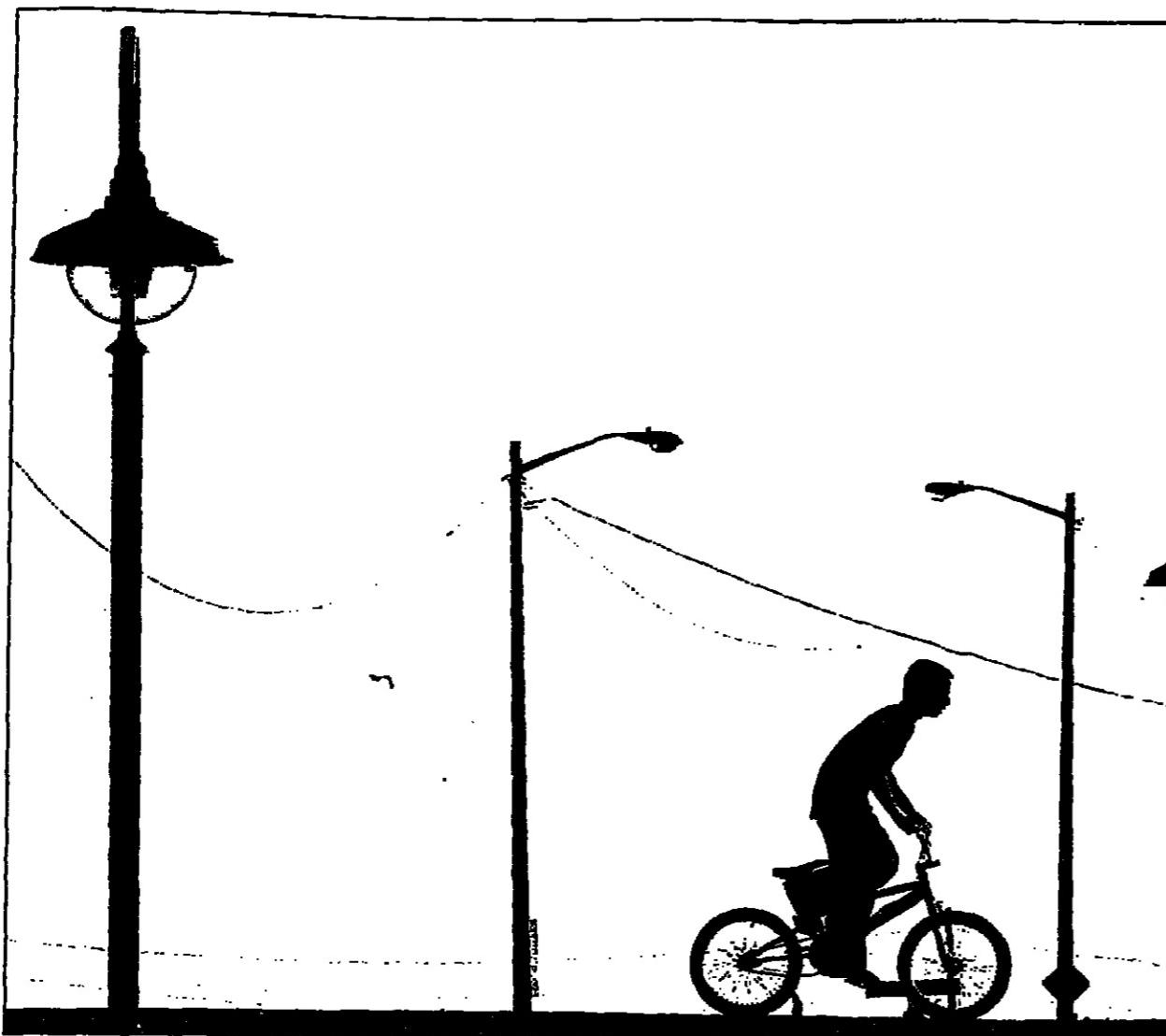
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JULIA'S
ARTS



A boy pedalling his bike across the stage at Buckroe Beach in Hampton, Virginia, yesterday evening

White House calls for quick solution

SAFE IN the knowledge that the Senate lacks the votes to convict and remove President Bill Clinton, the White House yesterday called for a rapid end to the impeachment trial and revived the idea of a formal censure.

The White House intervention, one of its most upbeat and aggressive since the trial began two weeks ago, came as Senate Republicans and Democrats wrangled over how to proceed to conclude the trial.

Having voted on Wednesday in a straight party-line vote to summon Monica Lewinsky and two other witnesses for questioning, the Senate was concerned to restore at least the appearance of cross-party cohesion for the rest of the trial.

Republicans fear the trial will otherwise appear purely political, fostering the sort of Democratic defiance seen in the White House Rose Garden after the impeachment vote in the House of Representatives.

Even after hours of closed-door discussions, separate meetings in party caucuses and multiple exchanges of

By MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

notes, there was still no agreement between the two parties on precisely what should happen next.

Mrs Lewinsky and the two other witnesses – Vernon Jordan, Mr Clinton's businessman friend who assisted Ms Lewinsky's job search, and the White House adviser, Sidney Blumenthal – are liable to be summoned to testify immediately, but who does the questioning and where, and whether Senators should view the recordings or merely read the transcripts has still to be decided. So does the timetable for what should follow.

Democrats see no point in dragging out the trial, given that Republicans lack the two-thirds majority to convict Mr Clinton.

Republicans, however, are divided, with some – including the House prosecutors – intent on examining as much more information as possible in the hope of finding a "smoking gun".

Exploiting the uncertainty in

the Senate, the White House sprang into the controversy yesterday, demanding that the Republicans explain why they were intent on pursuing the President, despite Wednesday's votes.

"They are trying to construct a procedure where they can convict, but not remove," the spokesman, Joe Lockhart, speculated, suggesting that they were simply trying to save face for the House prosecutors.

"Every time things seem to move on, they [the Republicans] seem to change the rules," he protested, continuing: "The burden is on the Republican majority to articulate why they are still doing this."

He reiterated President Clinton's readiness to accept a formal censure, but questioned the Senate's Constitutional right to pass a censure in the framework of the trial.

Behind the revival of the censure possibility, however, could be read signs of another disagreement, this time in the White House. Mr Clinton's top-flight lawyers were sending

sharp diverging messages about how they wanted the trial to conclude.

The White House chief counsel, Charles Ruff, and the special counsel, Gregory Craig, were calling openly for a rapid end to the trial. Mr Clinton's personal lawyer, David Kendall, however, was still demanding access to all the thousands of pages of evidence and favouring what could be a lengthy period of "discovery".

Mr Kendall was said to be concerned that if the Senate decided on a "convict but not remove" strategy, his client could be liable for criminal prosecution after he leaves office. As the President's personal lawyer, this is an eventuality he is obliged to prevent.

In Iraklik, the Turkish airbase used by British and US aircraft to patrol northern Iraq's no fly zone, was put on full alert yesterday after tracking systems identified a possible missile attack. The false alarm followed the bombing of an anti-aircraft position near Mosul by US aircraft.

US mayors to sue gun makers

By MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

also be resisted by the gun manufacturers who sense the build-up of a populist campaign similar to the one that extracted \$200m from tobacco companies at the end of last year.

The five mayors, all of whom are among the new breed of "manager" mayors, for whom administrative competence and efficiency are elevated above ideology, are united in their quest for federal legislation and intend to co-ordinate and consult on their separate lawsuits in the expectation that as many as 40 cities will have brought lawsuits by the summer. They are also being advised by many of the same lawyers who advised on suing the tobacco companies. But they differ on whether their individual recourse to the law for compensation will result in the sort of class-action suit that the states co-ordinated against the tobacco companies. The diversity of state and city legislation across the US makes joint action complicated.

The mayor of Philadelphia, Edward Rendell, who has been a leader in the fight for gun control, said it made no sense for cities and counties to have "one gun a month" laws, as some already do, if people could buy as many guns as they wanted on the other side of the city border. Joining Mr Rendell are the mayors of Dade County in Florida, which covers much of greater Miami, Bridgeport in Connecticut – both of which launched lawsuits against gunmakers this week – and the mayors of Chicago and New Orleans, which launched their suits last year.

As well as standardising purchasing legislation nationwide, the mayors want to close the "gun show loophole", where unlicensed gun shows may sell without the requisite background checks on the buyer's police record.

The mayors are calling for firearms to be covered by consumer product safety legislation, and for compulsory safety devices to be fitted, including child trigger locks and – in time – "smart" identity codes that enable only the licensed owner to fire the weapon.

The co-ordinated push for increased federal legislation is likely to be fiercely resisted by states and counties where gun ownership is seen as a fundamental civil right, especially rural areas and the South. It will

New Banking and Savings Interest Rates from Nationwide

FROM 1ST FEBRUARY 1999
RATES FOR PERSONAL SAVERS

| Previous | | | | | | New | | | | | | Previous | |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|-------|------------|----------|
| CashBuilder | AER | Gross p.a. | Net p.a. | AER | Gross p.a. | Net p.a. | FlexAccount | AER | Gross p.a. | Net p.a. | AER | Gross p.a. | Net p.a. |
| £50,000 + | 4.40% | 4.40% | 3.52% | 4.15% | 4.15% | 3.32% | £10,000 + | 3.10% | 3.10% | 2.48% | 2.85% | 2.85% | 2.28% |
| £25,000 - £49,999 | 4.10% | 4.10% | 3.38% | 3.85% | 3.85% | 3.08% | £10,000 - £24,999 | 2.10% | 2.10% | 1.68% | 1.85% | 1.85% | 1.48% |
| £10,000 - £24,999 | 3.70% | 3.70% | 2.96% | 3.45% | 3.45% | 2.76% | £2,000 - £9,999 | 1.50% | 1.50% | 1.20% | 1.25% | 1.25% | 1.00% |
| £5,000 - £9,999 | 3.50% | 3.50% | 2.96% | 3.25% | 3.25% | 2.66% | £1 - £1,000 | 1.00% | 1.00% | 0.80% | 1.00% | 1.00% | 0.80% |
| £1 - £4,999 | 3.30% | 3.30% | 2.64% | 3.10% | 3.10% | 2.48% | | | | | | | |
| £1 - £1,000 | 1.00% | 1.00% | 0.80% | 1.00% | 1.00% | 0.80% | | | | | | | |

| Previous | | | | | | New | | | | | | Previous | |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|-------|------------|----------|----------------------|-------|------------|----------|-------|------------|----------|
| CapitalBuilder | AER | Gross p.a. | Net p.a. | AER | Gross p.a. | Net p.a. | Special Renewal Bond | AER | Gross p.a. | Net p.a. | AER | Gross p.a. | Net p.a. |
| £50,000 + | 5.40% | 5.40% | 4.32% | 5.15% | 5.15% | 4.12% | £100,000 + | 7.20% | 7.20% | 5.76% | 6.95% | 6.95% | 5.50% |
| £25,000 - £49,999 | 5.10% | 5.10% | 4.08% | 4.85% | 4.85% | 3.88% | £50,000 - £99,999 | 6.80% | 6.80% | 5.44% | 6.60% | 6.60% | 5.28% |
| £10,000 - £24,999 | 4.80% | 4.80% | 3.84% | 4.55% | 4.55% | 3.64% | £25,000 - £49,999 | 6.60% | 6.60% | 5.38% | 6.35% | 6.35% | 5.08% |
| £1 - £9,999 | 4.60% | 4.60% | 3.68% | 4.40% | 4.40% | 3.52% | £10,000 - £24,999 | 6.40% | 6.40% | 5.12% | 6.20% | 6.20% | 4.96% |
| MonthlyIncome | | | | | | | £1 - £9,999 | 6.30% | 6.30% | 5.04% | 6.10% | 6.10% | 4.88% |
| £50,000 + | 5.22% | 5.22% | 4.08% | 4.96% | 4.96% | 3.88% | | | | | | | |
| £25,000 - £49,999 | 4.91% | 4.91% | 3.84% | 4.65% | 4.65% | 3.64% | | | | | | | |
| £10,000 - £24,999 | 4.59% | 4.59% | 3.60% | 4.33% | 4.33% | 3.40% | | | | | | | |
| £1 - £9,999 | 4.39% | 4.39% | 3.44% | 4.18% | 4.18% | 3.28% | | | | | | | |
| The Smart Account | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| £1 + | 6.92% | 6.80% | 5.44% | 6.71% | 6.60% | 5.28% | | | | | | | |
| Smart 2 Save | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| £1 + | 6.92% | 6.80% | 5.44% | 6.71% | 6.60% | 5.28% | | | | | | | |
| TESSA | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| £1 - £10,000 | 6.60% | 6.60% | 5.28% | 6.35% | 6.35% | 5.08% | | | | | | | |

| Previous | | | | | | New | | | | | | Previous | |
|---------------------|-------|-----------------|------------|----------|-------|-----------------|------------|----------|-------|-----------------|------------|----------|-----|
| Bonus Saver | AER | AER inc bonuses | Gross p.a. | Net p.a. | AER | AER inc bonuses | Gross p.a. | Net p.a. | AER | AER inc bonuses | Gross p.a. | Net p.a. | New |
| £1 + | 6.60% | 7.02% | 6.60% | 5.28% | 6.35% | 6.77% | 6.35% | 5.08% | 6.00% | 6.00% | 6.00% | 5.32% | |
| Bonus 60* Annual | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| £100,000 - £199,999 | 5.85% | 6.60% | 5.38% | 5.60% | 6.35% | 6.35% | 5.08% | 5.08% | 5.54% | 6.29% | 6.15% | 4.02% | |
| £50,000 - £99,999 | 5.45% | 6.20% | 5.70% | 4.95% | 5.95% | 5.95% | 4.76% | 4.76% | 5.01% | 5.76% | 5.65% | 4.52% | |
| £25,000 - £49,999 | 5.15% | 5.90% | 5.00% | 4.72% | 4.90% | 4.90% | 4.52% | 4.52% | 4.70% | 5.45% | 5.35% | 4.28% | |
| £10,000 - £24,999 | 4.85% | 5.60% | 5.00% | 4.49% | 4.60% | 4.60% | 4.28% | 4.28% | 4.59% | 5.14% | 5.05% | 4.04% | |
| £1 - £9,999 | 4.55% | 5.30% | 4.24% | 4.35% | 5.10% | 5.10% | 4.08% | 4.08% | 4.35% | 4.88% | 4.80% | 3.84% | |

* Bonus 60 Monthable rates (except the one) AER include a 0.25% gross p.a. (0.20% net p.a.) bonus which is variable and is credited to the account annually if no withdrawals are made during the calendar year. Bonus rates (except the one) AER include a 0.25% gross p.a. (0.20% net p.a.) bonus which will only be paid if between £10,000 and £19,999 per annum for at least 11 out of 12 months. No bonus is payable for a withdrawal or a transfer until the start month of the rate. Minimum term is 5 years. Maximum term is 10 years. Minimum term is 5 years. Maximum term is 10 years. Minimum term is 5 years. Maximum term is 10 years. Minimum term is 5 years. Maximum term is



Elephants amble through the bush in Tsavo National Park, Kenya. Wildlife experts believe the plan to relax the ivory trade ban is a severe threat to an already endangered animal.

Reuters

Ivory deal threatens elephants

BY LUCY HANNAN
in Nairobi

chasing buffalo and birds by a watering hole, he lifts his hands from the controls in ecstasy: "Wonderful! Great! Full of the joys of life!"

But after the high comes the low. He says he is terrified for the future of the animal whose

says Dr Douglas-Hamilton. "To the poachers, it's either open or shut. It will send all the wrong signals and trigger a huge demand for ivory again. We risk seeing again the awful slaughter of the 1980s."

With the Kenya Wildlife Service and other elephant experts, he is leading the most comprehensive elephant count in Kenya's Tsavo eco-system since 1994 - covering an area of 40,000 square kilometres. When the ivory trade opens up, the effects will be carefully monitored.

A steady increase in Kenya's biggest herd had been expected. But after a five-day count, observers came up with 8,100 elephants in the 21,000-sq km (8,400-sq mile) park. They also counted five fresh carcasses. Since 1990, the rate of growth of Tsavo's herd has averaged about 3.8 per cent, but

"It is extremely risky to open up the trade, even partially."



Dr Iain Douglas-Hamilton (left) checks his air search area of Tsavo National Park with a colleague. Reuters

the last week's count points to a drop of about 1 per cent. No one yet understands why.

Tsavo once held 45,000 ele-

phants, so the recent figures are tiny. But they are consid-

erably mutilated by automatic weapons were so common in Tsavo 10 years ago that in some areas there were more animals dead than alive. That left an indelible mark on populations that can live to 70 years.

"You don't see elephants more than about 40," says Paula Kahumbu, the project's overall co-ordinator.

Not all poaching is com-

mercial. John Kagwe, a senior Tsavo warden, says "subsistence poaching" for meat is "wrong, but understandable". As more people eke out a living on the peripheries of the parks, they often resort to snaring animals with homemade wires and cables.

One of the dilemmas of

maintaining the parks - and

particularly elephants - is con-

vincing the community that

the beasts that trample their

carcasses of elephants hor-

izon, there has been more rhetoric about "community involvement" than success, with continual (and usually uncompensated) destruction of crops.

The fragile recovery of the

Tsavo elephant population was

attributed to the worldwide ban

on ivory trading imposed in 1989

by the Convention of Interna-

tional Trade in Endangered

Species. Kenya was one of its

most vocal supporters, then

led by Dr Richard Leakey, re-

appointed director of Kenya

Wildlife Service last September.

He wants the count done before

the ban is relaxed.

"Fresh carcasses have been found during the count," he says. "If that means an in-

crease in poaching, then I've got

a problem on my hands."

He believes about 40 ele-

phants have been killed outside

the national parks over the

past four months.

The chief minister Chan-

drabu Naidu's bold vision of

economics and technological

revolution has put the city at the

forefront of the movement to re-

form India. The 16 flyovers

soaring across the city centre

are only the most visible sign of

its transformation, made pos-

sible by a World Bank loan.

There is no reason to link the

city's dead infants with the

modernisation process. But

they are a grisly reminder of the

depth of despair and poverty

still to be overcome.

Babies' deaths haunt India

By PETER POPHAM
in Delhi

TELEGRAPHICALLY decomposed bodies of newborn babies have been found in an open drain in the city of Hyderabad, north-eastern India, in the past eight days.

The first five corpses recovered last Wednesday were found behind a doorway to a post-mortem examination room of police. Other bodies have failed to reveal whether the children were stillborn or born alive because they had been dismembered and the limbs had been torn from the body to provide them with organs for transplant.

One infant was found three more were found in the same hospital, though how many more are still to be found in India has not been disclosed.

According to local news reports there are now

at least 100 cases of stillborn babies

and dismembered limbs

have been found in the city. In 1997, 100 babies were found in the same hospital.

Human rights groups have

Military boosts hopes of a free East Timor

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY

IN ANOTHER remarkable reversal of policy, Indonesia's most senior general said yesterday that the country's armed forces support the government's willingness to grant independence to the occupied territory of East Timor.

"If the situation develops in such a way that allows East Timor to separate with dignity from the Republic of Indonesia, certainly the Indonesian armed forces (Abri) would respect the decision," said General Wiranto, the defence minister and commander in chief.

The Indonesian troops are figures of intense hatred in East Timor, a former Portuguese colony that was annexed by Jakarta after an invasion in 1975. On Wednesday, Indonesia's foreign and justice ministers said that East Timor would be given "special autonomy". If that was rejected by the people of the territory, they could be granted independence by the Indonesian parliament.

"One needs to be aware that integration was then [in 1976] the best solution," General Wiranto said. "But if one day East Timor separates from Indonesia it will be the best solution for that time."

Abri's intervention in East Timor was to prevent more bloodshed in the region after Portugal left the region arbitrarily," he said. "It was the best solution. We should no longer blame each other."

Throughout the 23 years of Indonesian occupation, it is the military above all that has refused any compromise over the status of the territory. In the past, military commanders have argued that to give independence to East Timor would encourage secessionist movements in other parts of Indonesia, such as Aceh, on the island of Sumatra, and Irian Jaya in New Guinea.

Human rights groups have



East Timorese refugees in Dili showing support yesterday for the proposal to allow them autonomy. Reuters

argued that the war in East Timor actually suits armed forces, providing them with a justification for their military budget and a useful place to conduct "live" training.

General Wiranto's argument yesterday that Abri's intervention after Portugal left was to prevent more bloodshed will raise suspicions about its true intentions.

In 1975, Indonesia justified its invasion by claiming that it was restoring order in a territory divided by civil war. In fact, most of the opponents of Falintil, the East Timorese armed forces, were stooges of the Indonesian government, armed and trained by Abri. Recently,

there has been conflict between supporters of Falintil and gangs of East Timorese thugs who are widely believed to be organised and equipped by Abri, and raising fears that Indonesia may be covertly reviving its strategy of divide and rule.

Jose Ramos Horta, the East Timorese foreign minister in exile, and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, said: "I will start believing when they pull out the troops from East Timor; when they allow the United Nations multinational police force to land in East Timor. Then there will be peace. Right now, the Indonesians are fomenting, instigating violence there, so

before then it cannot happen."

The Indonesian foreign minister, Ali Alatas, a long-time apologist for Jakarta's policies in the territory, touched on the possibility of disorder in East Timor yesterday when he rejected the possibility of a referendum. It will avoid bloodshed, he said.

There was no further news on the fate of Alexandre Xanana Gusman, the imprisoned Timorese guerrilla leader, whom Jakarta has promised will be released into a kind of house arrest. Yesterday, the Indonesian parliament passed three Bills intended to enable democratic elections to be held in the country for the first time in 40 years.

Indonesia's former president Suharto, who ordered the invasion of East Timor, stepped down in May after bloody riots and anti-government protests hit the capital, killing 1,200 people.

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Paris of the East looks westward

EUROPEAN TIMES
BUCHAREST

IN THE 1930s, when Bucharest was renowned as the "Paris of the East" for its luxurious restaurants and exotic nightlife, the Athenee Palace Hotel was home from home to Europe's demi-monde of exiled royals, dispossessed aristocrats and lounge lizards.

The hotel was immortalised in Olivia Manning's bestseller *The Balkan Trilogy*, a barey veiled account of her and her husband's lives in wartime Romania. Televised as a BBC series *The Fortunes of War*, the programme helped to launch the acting careers of Emma Thompson and Kenneth Branagh in the roles of Harriet and Guy Pringle.

The history of Romania has unfolded along the hotel's corridors, stalked by generations of secret policemen - Monarchist, Nazi, Communist, especially the notorious Securitate of the hated dictator Nicolae Ceausescu - watching and monitoring Western guests.

The days of dictators have vanished and now Romania is a democracy, although one with a thin veneer, as last week's pitched battles between striking miners and police illustrated.

During the Second World War, the Athenee Palace was the favoured billet of German officers, as well as American foreign correspondents who did their bit for the Allied war effort by hiding the jackboots that were left out for polishing.

I first stayed at the Athenee Palace during the miners' riots of autumn 1991 - a fitting introduction to the Balkan intrigue that still characterises Romania. Clouds of tear-gas drifted by outside as hundreds of grimy miners ran amok across the city, wielding clubs and planks studded with nails.

In every corner of the hotel foyer dodgy-looking men in badly cut suits sat obscured by plumes of cigarette smoke, while women of the night - and day - painted their nails.

There were dozens of empty rooms but I still had to bribe the concierge to find me a place to sleep and the telephone to connect me to an international telephone line.

Those days are gone now, and the once gloriously Balkan pile has been given a post-modern makeover, transformed into a £200-a-night Hilton. The service has improved but the atmosphere of intrigue has vanished.

The drivers of horse-drawn carriages that the Pringles used have also vanished, and now those seeking a quick passage across the city use Dacia taxis. Ask a taxi-driver how much is the fare, and he will, as often as not, tell you to pay however much you think fit, part of the engagingly laid-back Romanian charm.

As in pre-war days, the city's main shopping street is the Calea Victoriei. Under the madness of Ceausescu-era Communism, most of the shops and cafés that gave the street its former vitality vanished. But slowly, the Calea Victoriei, like its equivalents in Budapest, Prague and Warsaw, is coming to life. Once almost pitch black at night, the bright lights of downtown Bucharest rival if not London or Paris, at least east Berlin.

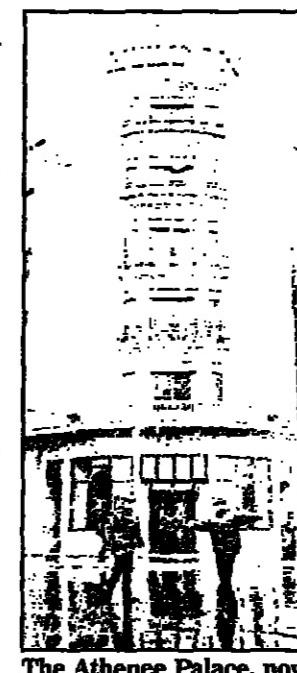
Here the city's *nouveau riche* may purchase all those accoutrements deemed necessary for capitalist life: make-up by Estee Lauder, clothes by Benetton and Stefanel and mobile telephones by Nokia.

As well as the ubiquitous McDonald's and Pizza Hut - both hugely popular with young people and still a novelty in a country where the tradition of eating out had been all but eradicated - Bucharest now boasts a mini-culinary renaissance of Romanian food, with many small family-run restaurants opening up.

In most post-Communist European capitals such events would be unremarkable, the natural progress of modernisation that follows a free-market economy. But even by Communist standards Romania was not a normal country.

Ceausescu's legacy to his people - apart from a wrecked economy and crumbling national infrastructure - is the massive presidential palace, on a hill overlooking Bucharest, that still casts a shadow, both real and metaphorical. But Ceausescu never got to stand on the palace's balcony to receive his people's acclaim. That honour was left to the former president Ion Iliescu and ironically, one of capitalism's ultimate icons - the pop star Michael Jackson.

ADAM LEIBOWITZ



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BUSINESS

BRIEFING

Budget day set for 9 March

BUDGET DAY will be on Tuesday 9 March, it was announced yesterday. Responding to questions in the House of Commons, Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, named the day for his third Budget statement and said the government would continue to be disciplined on public spending.

The Chancellor reaffirmed that the Government would meet its golden rule of only borrowing to invest. He insisted Britain would not rejoin the European Exchange Rate Mechanism, despite claims by the Conservatives that this would be a condition of eventual entry to the euro.

Losses increase at Mulberry

MULBERRY, the troubled luxury goods group, reported increased first-half losses and scrapped its interim dividend. Founder Roger Saul (pictured) said trading was "as difficult and tough to read as I can remember". Losses rose to £30.000 compared with £22.000 last time.

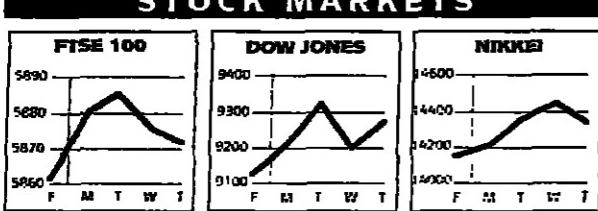
The company, which has issued a string of profits warning since floating on AIM two years ago, has been hit by the strong pound and a slump in demand from Asian buyers. Like-for-like retail sales are down 5 per cent on last year.

White knight for P&S newspapers

A CONSORTIUM of investors led by Charles Villiers, former head of Scottish Radio's newspaper division, emerged yesterday as one of at least four potential white knights willing to rescue Portsmouth & Sunderland newspapers from Johnston Press. Talks have taken place with Charles Brinsford, the chief executive of P&S, and the consortium has the resources to top Johnston's offer. Mr Villiers said:

Johnston acquired a 14.99 per cent stake last Friday at 1,600p and has issued a tender offer at the same price for a further 10 per cent, which closes on Saturday. The shares were flat at 1,687.5p.

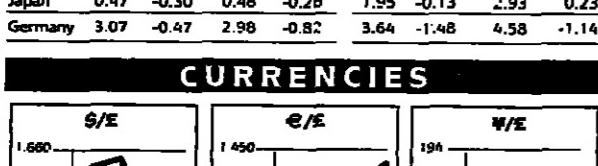
STOCK MARKETS



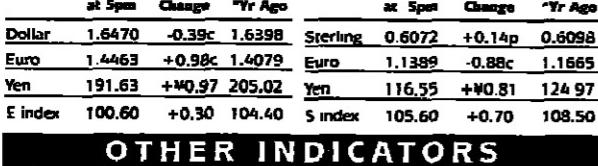
| INDICES | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------|---------------|--------------|
| Index | Close | Change | Change (%) | 52 wks | Hgh | Lgh | 52 wks | Avg Yield (%) | Yr Yield (%) |
| FTSE 100 | 5,612.50 | -3.90 | -0.07 | 6,195.60 | 4,599.20 | 2,75 | | | |
| FTSE 250 | 4,998.10 | 55.60 | 1.13 | 5,870.90 | 4,247.60 | 3.32 | | | |
| FTSE 350 | 2,777.30 | 3.20 | 0.12 | 2,969.10 | 2,210.40 | 2.84 | | | |
| FTSE All Share | 2,681.14 | 3.72 | 0.14 | 2,886.52 | 2,143.52 | 2.89 | | | |
| FTSE Small Cap | 2,115.10 | 1.30 | 0.59 | 2,793.80 | 1,634.50 | 3.83 | | | |
| FTSE Fleeting | 1,183.50 | 2.90 | 0.23 | 1,517.10 | 1,045.20 | 4.58 | | | |
| FTSE AIM | 830.90 | -0.50 | -0.04 | 1,146.90 | 761.30 | 1.20 | | | |
| FTSE Eurozone 100 | 2,770.22 | +1.03 | 0.50 | 3,079.27 | 2,018.15 | 2.14 | | | |
| FTSE Eurozone 300 | 12,077.73 | 16.66 | 1.40 | 13,327.07 | 8,863.19 | 1.99 | | | |
| Dow Jones | 9,828.36 | 82.39 | 0.90 | 9,647.90 | 7,400.30 | 1.65 | | | |
| Nikkei | 14,324.32 | -107.74 | -0.75 | 17,352.30 | 12,787.90 | 1.01 | | | |
| Hang Seng | 9,350.95 | -352.70 | -3.69 | 11,926.16 | 6,544.79 | 3.76 | | | |
| Dax | 5,096.41 | 35.23 | 0.70 | 6,217.83 | 3,833.71 | 1.69 | | | |
| S&P 500 | 1,261.62 | 16.47 | 1.49 | 1,278.05 | 923.32 | 1.25 | | | |
| Nasdaq | 2,455.94 | 48.80 | 2.03 | 2,474.30 | 1,357.09 | 0.28 | | | |
| Toronto 300 | 6,684.90 | 33.19 | 0.50 | 7,837.70 | 5,320.90 | 1.50 | | | |
| Brazil Bovespa | 7841.40 | 154.26 | 2.01 | 12,339.14 | 4,575.69 | 8.02 | | | |
| Belgium Bell 20 | 3,405.91 | 42.39 | 1.26 | 3,713.21 | 2,552.07 | 2.08 | | | |
| Amsterdam Exch | 538.98 | 7.39 | 1.39 | 600.65 | 366.58 | 1.82 | | | |
| France CAC 40 | 4,199.67 | 101.57 | 2.48 | 4,604.94 | 2,881.21 | 1.92 | | | |
| Milan Mib30 | 3,446.00 | 697.00 | 2.07 | 3,917.00 | 2,415.00 | 1.19 | | | |
| Madrid Ibex 35 | 9832.20 | 227.70 | 2.32 | 10,898.70 | 6,689.90 | 1.89 | | | |
| Ireland Overall | 5,188.08 | -11.85 | -0.23 | 5,581.70 | 3,723.57 | 1.46 | | | |
| S Korea Comp | 571.47 | 6.27 | 1.11 | 651.95 | 277.37 | 1.04 | | | |
| Australia ASX | 2,877.20 | 25.80 | 0.91 | 2,902.90 | 2,386.70 | 3.19 | | | |



| MONEY MARKET RATES | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|------|--------|------------|
| Index | 3 months | Yr chg | 1 Year | Yr chg | 10 year | Yr chg | Long | Yr chg | Yr chg (%) |
| UK | 5.82 | -1.75 | 5.52 | -1.98 | 4.13 | -1.99 | 4.19 | -1.25 | |
| US | 4.97 | -0.66 | 5.04 | -0.68 | 4.67 | 1.02 | 5.12 | 0.83 | |
| Japan | 0.47 | -0.30 | 0.48 | -0.26 | 1.95 | -0.13 | 2.93 | 0.23 | |
| Germany | 3.07 | -0.47 | 2.98 | -0.82 | 3.64 | -1.46 | 4.58 | -1.14 | |



| CURRENCIES | | | | | | | | | |
|------------|---------|-------|---------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Index | S/E | E/S | W/E | | | | | | |
| Dollar | 1,647.0 | -0.39 | 1,639.8 | | | | | | |
| Euro | 1,446.3 | +0.58 | 1,407.9 | | | | | | |
| Yen | 191.63 | +0.97 | 205.20 | | | | | | |
| E Index | 100.60 | +0.30 | 104.40 | | | | | | |
| Pound | 1,655.0 | -0.28 | 1,645.0 | | | | | | |



| OTHER INDICATORS | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------|------------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------|
| Class | Chg | Yr Ago | Index | Chg | Yr Ago | Next Rep | Chg | Yr Ago | Yr Ago |
| Brent Oil (\$) | 10.92 | -0.08 | 15.71 | GDP | 115.40 | 30.00 | 112.04 | Mar | |
| Gold (\$) | 263.95 | -0.75 | 305.38 | RPI | 164.40 | 2.80 | 159.92 | Jan | |
| Silver (\$) | 5.09 | 0.01 | 6.02 | Base Rates | 6.00 | 7.25 | | Oct | at 5pm |

www.bloomberg.com

SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

TOURIST RATES

| Australia (\$) | 2,538.00 | Mexican (nuevo peso) | 15.25 |
|----------------------|----------|----------------------|-------|
| Austria (schillings) | 19.19 | | |
| Belgium (francs) | 56.41 | | |
| Canada (\$) | 2,440.8 | | |
| Cyprus (pounds) | 0.8089 | | |
| Denmark (krone) | 10.44 | | |
| Finland (markka) | 8,327.0 | | |
| France (francs) | 9,167.9 | | |
| Germany (marks) | 2,743.1 | | |
| Greece (drachma) | 450.46 | | |
| Hong Kong (\$) | 12.38 | | |
| Ireland (pounds) | 1,098.3 | | |
| Indian (rupees) | 62.95 | | |
| Israel (shekels) | 6,213.0 | | |
| Italy (lira) | 2716 | | |
| Japan (yen) | 186.77 | | |
| Malaysia (ringgit) | 5,9719 | | |
| Malta (lira) | 0.6095 | | |

Rates for indication purposes only

Source: Thomas Cook

Ford aims for the top with \$6.5bn Volvo cars takeover

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

FORD YESTERDAY set its sights on becoming the world's leading manufacturer of luxury cars after announcing the \$6.5bn (£4bn) takeover of the car division of Volvo.

The deal with the Swedish manufacturer is latest in a series of mega-mergers in the motor industry, will increase Ford's world market share to 14 per cent and is likely to prompt a further wave of consolidation.

Jacques Nasser, Ford chief executive, said it intended to produce 700,000 luxury vehicles next year, with the ultimate aim of reaching 1 million units a year. He said Volvo, together with Ford's other luxury marques, Lincoln and Jaguar, gave it "a wonderful footprint" in the upmarket car sector.

20/MANAGED FUNDS

Davos to focus on Brazil and US

BY JEREMY WARNER
in Davos, Switzerland

THE BRAZIL crisis and the growing US trade deficit are expected to top the agenda at informal meetings of G7 leaders today and this weekend at the annual World Economic Forum meeting in Davos.

Officials said Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, would press Robert Rubin, the US Treasury Secretary, on the need for urgent reform of the International Monetary Fund in view of the seriousness of the Brazil crisis.

Mr Rubin plans bilateral talks with finance ministers at the Forum, including those from France and Mexico. A general, albeit private, meeting of all political leaders attending the Forum is also planned.

The Brazilian finance minister, Pedro Sangalo Malan, cancelled his visit at the last minute because of intense negotiations with the IMF.

More prosaic reasons were cited by others for non-attendance at what is widely seen as Europe's premier business networking conference. Heavy snowfalls caused extensive delays on roads approaching the Swiss Alpine resort, forcing some delegates, including US Vice-President Al Gore, to abandon plans to fly by helicopter and use the train.

A less visible Russian presence than in previous years was blamed on growing economic disintegration in the former Soviet Union. "Davos is no longer interested in us, and we are not interested in Davos," said Russia's leading business daily, *Kommersant*.

Amid anxiety about the US position as spender of last resort in the world economy, Ken Dobbie, chief economist and strategist with Deutsche Bank for Japan and Asia Pacific, said further interest-rate cuts and inflationary measures around the world would keep financial markets robust this year.



A security guard stands in front of the Davos Congress Centre yesterday as the annual week-long World Economic Forum gets under way Remy Steinegger

| COMPANY RESULTS | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|----------|
| Name | Turnover (£) | Pre-tax (£) | EPS | Dividend | Pay day | X-dv |
| Alephantic (SP) | 11.46m (13.66m) | 0.900m (0.10m) | 1.29p (0.02p) | - | 08/02/99 | |
| Bassett Crises (F) | 38.01m (24.51m) | 3.01m (5.58m) | 4.75p (6.67p) | 2.0p (1.54p) | 16/04/99 | 08/02/99 |
| Bryant Group (I) | 29.4m (26.2m) | 2.95m (21.3m) | 7.16p (2.29p) | 1.53p (1.45p) | 16/04/99 | 08/02/99 |
| Consolidated Coal (I) | 3.59m (2.88m) | 0.004m (0.003m) | -0.2p (-0.2p) | - | - | |
| Creditights (I) | 2.87m (2.41m) | -1.37m (-0.74m) | -0.59p (-0.48p) | - | - | |
| Fairprice Consulting (I) | 1.34m (0.715m) | 0.315m (0.17m) | 0.7p (0.11p) | 0.045p (0.036p) | 06/04/99 | 15/03/99 |
| Financial Group (I) | 24.22m (21.53m) | 0.32m (0.22m) | 0.82p (0.52p) | 0.25p (0.22p) | 26/02/99 | 08/02/99 |
| International Brokingage (I) | 27.22m (21.12m) | 2.07m (1.79m) | 10.6p (8.59p) | 3.0p (2.50p) | 26/02/99 | 08/02/99 |
| Modleys (F) | 4.24pm (4.096m) | -4.383m (-2.909m) | -2.75p (-1.12p) | - | - | |
| Mitsys (I) | 288m (178m) | 59m (32m) | 7.5p (5.4p) | 1.21p (1.05p) | 06/04/99 | 08/02/99 |
| Mobility Group (I) | 12.94m (13.77m) | -0.803m (-0.722m) | -2.70p (-2.30p) | -0.75p | - | |
| NFW Group (I) | 47.0m (38.61m) | 1.04m (0.944m) | 8.5p (8.9p) | 2.9p (2.6p) | 03/05/99 | 08/03/99 |
| F - Final I - Interim Q - Quarterly (SP) Split Period (M) - Nine Months | | | | | | |

(F - Final I - Interim Q - Quarterly (SP) SPLIT PERIOD (M) - Nine Months)

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK



Fishy stories in the markets

STRANGE EVENTS seem to be stirring in London Docklands this week. First there was a report that the London Stock Exchange was moving from its historic base in Threadneedle Street to New Billingsgate Market, the fish market adjacent to Canary Wharf.

Then there was the story that Bank of America has jibbed plans to move its European Headquarters to Canary Wharf "because of fears over Britain being outside the euro". Both stories have been firmly denied by the parties involved - and both have got everyone hopping mad.

A spokesman for the Stock Exchange derided the very idea that the exchange planned to build a new dealing floor in the former fish market - "we've only just gone electronic".

A Bank of America spokesman dismissed the idea that it had been scared off moving to Canary Wharf by Tony Blair's

dithering over European Monetary Union as "fantasy".

Maybe. But both stories indicate the nervousness in the Square Mile over London's future, particularly over the first month's figures for how much trading in the euro has been won by London - due out any day now.

Shore of Israel

SHORE CAPITAL Group, an independent broking and corporate finance house with strong links to Israel, is benefiting from global financial turmoil. The 30-strong firm, which is a quarter-owned by Bank Leumi, is setting up an Israel Desk headed by Ian Kennedy, formerly head of emerging

markets. European Equities at BZW.

BZW shut down emerging markets when it sold its remaining equities business to CSFB. Then Mr Kennedy moved to Caspian Securities, the emerging markets house founded by Christopher Heath - which in turn fell victim to the global financial fallout of last summer.

Mr Kennedy will be joined at Shore Capital by a former colleague from BZW, Arnon Rubinstein, whose father was one of Israel's most distinguished finance ministers. Upon BZW's demise Mr Rubinstein joined Santander Investment in January 1998. That Spanish-owned investment house shut down its London equities business when Russia reneged on its debts -

Mr Hardern, the freelance butler and "carpet-bagger in chief", has failed in his campaign to get elected to the boards of all seven of the largest remaining building societies, in order to force them to convert to banks. The Chelsea Building Society yesterday that it had rejected the nomination of Mr Hardern as a director "through lack of sufficient support". Mr Hardern's resolution to force the society to convert, triggering "windfall" payoffs to its members, was also rejected "following legal advice on the grounds that it was invalid". So far Mr Hardern, who also wants every citizen of the UK to be made a member of the House of Lords, has only been

E-mail: j.willcock@independent.co.uk

around the same time Caspian shut its doors.

Still, it's good news for Howard Shore, who founded Shore Capital Group in 1985. "We're into the Israeli market for the long term," he says.

Butler rebuff

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BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

BIG IS ugly in fund management. That, broadly, is the conclusion to be drawn from the latest CAPS survey, the authoritative study of fund management performance sent each year to Britain's pension fund trustees.

The 1998 survey, published yesterday by the CAPS consultancy, shows big household names such as Schroders, Mercury and Phillips & Drew languishing near the bottom of the table, while star billing is taken by virtual unknowns.

The best performer in terms of the return on the flagship mixed-with-property fund last year is the little-known Fuji-Lord Abbott fund, 75 per cent owned by Fuji, the Japanese bank, and 25 per cent by Lord Abbott, America's second-biggest independent fund management group. It returned 21.2 per cent, compared with an average of 13 per cent. Second place was taken by Singer & Friedlander at 18 per cent, and third place went to Swiss Life.

Fiji, followed surprisingly by Royal SunAlliance, emerges as the most consistent performer over the past five years.

"The one thing the top five have in common is that they are all small," says CAPS chief executive John Clamp. Fuji came \$1b globally, but the UK fund tracked by the CAPS survey managers just \$26m.

Simon Steele, Fuji's UK fund manager, says: "We do things slightly differently from the competition. The firm's style, he says, is not to pick stocks but to identify which industries have the best growth potential and pricing flexibility globally.

"We draw up the ideal characteristics and then go around the world and try and find them."

The result is a list of 800 "best of breed" companies worldwide that are then screened financially and whitelisted down to a portfolio of 50 to

News analysis: The major fund managers languish among the also-rans in the latest CAPS survey

For big returns, go with the little guys

ing from the severe setback it was dealt by the downfall of high-flier Peter Young three years ago, ended a respectable 20th.

One factor that has hit the performance of many larger British funds is their faith in the UK small and medium-sized company sector, which seriously disappointed last year. David Montgomery, it has been said in the City, may not be the only FTSE 250 chief executive to find his job a casualty of the pressure on asset managers to hasten the process of delivering the value they had expected in these stocks.

While the FTSE 100 rose by 17.5 per cent last year, the FTSE 250 advanced just 4.8 per cent. The unloved small cap index was down 8.1 per cent.

The big funds have also pursued a strategy of concentrating their holdings so that they take fewer bigger bets on a handful of companies - great when their number comes up, but disastrous if bets go wrong.

Perhaps the most surprising statistic from the survey is that more than half of fund managers underperformed the index - not the first time this point has been made, but worrying still, considering that these people charge whopping fees to manage our pensions.

Even more astonishing is that, judging from the growth of funds under management, underperforming the index, while embarrassing, does the big boys little harm. Everyone acknowledges the importance of performance, but on this score trustees rarely vote with their cash. Mr Clamp says: "Managers get fired, first because they are not doing what they say they would do, and second because of poor administration, like getting portfolio statements wrong. A very poor third comes performance."

60 companies in which the fund actually invests.

Clearly in the dunces' class was Phillips & Drew, which came 67 out of 67 in the last quarter, although for the year the dubious distinction of coming bottom goes to Abbey Life.

P&D fund manager Tony Dye's dogged, now legendary determination to stay heavily in cash and bonds, avoid the US equity market altogether and be underweight in UK shares

underperformed the index.

But it would be wrong to focus on P&D alone. Over the last 12 months, Schroders came 55th, Mercury came 32nd, while Morgan Grenfell, now recover-

ing smartly in the third quarter, when all gains made by

competitors on the stock market in the first half were wiped out. But it looked less clever after the fourth quarter, when major markets staged a spectacular rally to end the year substantially up overall.

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Bid fever as small caps stage comeback

ARE MID and small cap shares, after seven months of unrelenting gloom, at last staging a comeback?

The contested bid for Lucas Variety, a Footsie constituent, has focused attention on the bombed-out metal bashers and helped to alert investors to the undoubted value lurking on the stock market under-card.

Bids, often in cash, for the smaller fry are becoming a daily event and management buy-outs and share buy-backs also tend to underline the hidden value.

The mid cap index, admittedly from a depressed level, has risen nearly 130 points over the past four days to 4,958.9. Even so it is still near-

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

group Airtech, where a predator hovers, rose 7p to 38p.

And the £3.9bn Ford de-

scent on Volvo's car division prodded Henlys up 4p to 472.5p. Volvo has 10 per cent of the vehicle group.

Rumours of bid action pursued further progress at Albright & Wilson, where suddenly active fund manager Phillips & Drew has nearly 25 per cent. The shares rose a further 10.5p to 76.5p with a management buy-out the favourite guess. Another chemical group, Croda International, put on 18.5p to 175.5p.

Engineers continued their progress. Morgan Crucible hardened a further 1.4p to 202.5p; Britax up to 118p and ICI 9p to 215.5p. Glynnwood International firmed 5.5p to 164.5p. Six Hundred Group was 9.5p better at 77p.

Lucas Variety and the already spoken for Adwest Automotive clearly enjoy the distinction of rearing interest in the smaller groups. LV firmed 7p to 290.5p as TRW, a US group, rolled out a bid, and rival Federal-Mogul continued to hover.

Granada, on the other hand, is seen as preparing a predatory excursion. There is a growing suspicion the leisure group has decided on its next target and is flexing its muscles. The shares rose 34p to 1,086p. Whitbread, up 16p to 850p, is one rumoured target.

Footsie after riding high for much of the session again, subsided towards the close, ending 3.9 points down at 5,872.5. Trading was again hectic with turnover nudging 1.3 billion shares. At mid-afternoon the index was up 83.4.

The heavy volume seems to reflect determined overseas buying with many domestic fund managers prepared to unload some stock on which

they are nursing comfortable profits. Government stocks were little changed.

Bass, for no apparent reason although there was talk of a market maker being caught on the hop, led the Footsie leader board, gaining 52.5p to 851.5p. The shares have come down from 1,175p. There are hopes the brewer and hotelier will roll out a positive trading statement at next week's shareholders meeting.

United News & Media was given a Merrill Lynch put, gaining 23.5p to 547p and Imperial Chemical Industries retreated 24.5p to 525p as WestLB Panmure said sell.

Bowater, the electronics group, was the subject of heavy turnover.

Salomon Smith Barney, just appointed joint stockbrokers replacing Credit Lyonnais, was thought to have been responsible for much of the 15 million Seag volume. Bowthorpe is anxious to expand in the US and was attracted by Salomon's powerful Trans-Atlantic presence.

Mortgage banks were hit. HSBC turned negative and the retreat, already evident following Northern Rock's competitive stance, quickly got underway. Halifax fell 32p to 722.5p and Abbey National 53p to 1,202p. Northern lost 9.5p to 488p.

Clearance by the European Commission of P&O's joint venture with Stena Line encouraged the cruise group to record a 28p gain at 638.5p.

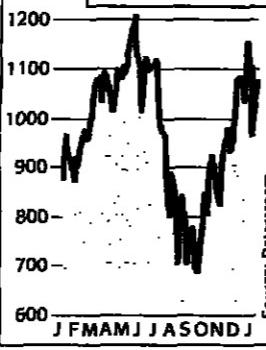
British Land gained 10p to 43p. Analysts are due to meet the company next week.

Oils were mixed. BP Amoco fell 5p to 838p and Shell firmed to 307.75p. Esso added 6.25p to 103.75p. Emerald Energy edged ahead to

SHARE SPOTLIGHT

share price, pence

GRANADA



SEAG VOLUME: 1.3bn
SEAG TRADES: 73,561
GILTS INDEX: 116.86-0.07

Source: Datstream

4p; it is now expected its rights issue will be announced next week.

The shake-up at struggling Premier Farnell, the electronic components distributor, lifted the shares 29p to 191.5p. CSFB helped sentiment by suggesting the price could double.

British Steel hardened 6p to 127p. Warburg Dillon Read regards the shares as a buy, suggesting they could go to 150p. But dividend worries lowered BICC, the cables and construction group where take over hopes swirl: the price lost 2p to 59p.

Profit warnings took their toll. Save, the petrol retailer, lost 14.5p to 38p after saying it would not pay a final divi-

PHILLIPS & DREW has edged its stake in the voting shares of Young & Co's Brewery to 21.2 per cent. The fund manager is adopting a more aggressive stance but it was not evident whether last year Guinness Peat attempted to change the family controlled group's antiquated capital structure. Whether P&D's new found hands-on approach will extend to linking with GP remains to be seen. Young was unchanged at 612.5p.

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four years ago the shares were 269.5p.

Floral Street was suspended at 32.5p while it considers its position. The shares were once 343p.

Systems Integrated, a software group, continued to romp ahead despite the company's comment that it knows of no reason for the excitement. The shares gained a further 9.25p to 28.75p. They have been above 100p.

Dragon Oil, which fared on the 69 per cent shareholding of Dubai's Emirates National Oil Co., was hit by profit taking, collapsing 7.5p to 20.5p.

Darby, a building materials group, fell 4p to 33.5p as Mike Darby quit as chairman and chief executive. Mark Abrahams, a non-executive director, has taken over.

His comments came as the group, a market leader in financial software, underlined

the boom in demand for IT services in the past six months with a 40 per cent increase in interim pre-tax profit £59m.

The results were driven by a buoyant performance in the banking division and a marked improvement in Medic, the healthcare software specialist bought last year for almost \$1bn. The numbers were ahead of market expectations and triggered a series of profit upgrades, sparking a rally in the share price which closed over 17 per cent higher to 586p.

INVESTMENT

Farnell to invest £45m in going back to basics

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

Premier Farnell, the electrical components distributor, unveiled an extensive shake-up yesterday designed to rebuild the business after the disastrous £1.8bn Premier acquisition in America in 1996.

The three-year "investment for growth" strategy is the result of a six-month review by John Hirst, appointed chief executive last summer. It will see the group invest £45m over three years in reshaping systems, creating common customer and product databases and developing more efficient purchasing and logistics systems in the US.

A further £15m a year will be invested in upgraded sales training, increasing the number of catalogues and range of products. The group will increase its electronic commerce capability so that its largest customers, such as Philips, are linked directly to Premier Farnell through intranet systems.

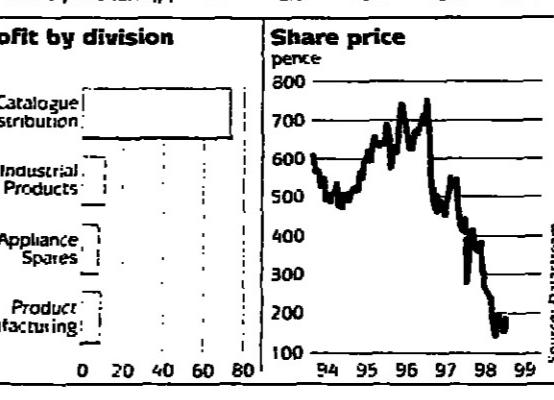
Geographic expansion is also on the cards, with Germany and other European markets first on the list.

The overhaul will result in a £10m exceptional charge to the accounts for the year to 31 January. Most expenditure will be covered by the sale of surplus assets, such as spare free-

PREMIER FARNELL: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £520m, share price 191.5p (+29p)

| | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 |
|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Trading record | | | | | |
| Turnover (£m) | 320 | 514 | 539 | 983 | 744 |
| Pre-tax profits (£m) | 49.1 | 59.2 | 111 | 173 | 139 |
| Earnings per share (p) | 23.2 | 27.5 | 54.7 | 36.5 | 25.3 |
| Dividends per share (p) | 7.0 | 3.5 | 10.3 | 12.0 | 12.9 |



US, for example, Premier Farnell has lost more than 1 percentage point of market share, although US sales have now been "stabilised".

Many back-office functions will now be streamlined, leaving scope for expansion in the key areas of products and catalogues. "Value has been destroyed," Mr Hirst admitted. "We have to get back on track."

The changes were welcomed by analysts, who marked the shares 29p up to 191.5p. However, they have still lost three-quarters of their value since 1996. Earnings per share are lower now than in 1995, although sales have risen 50 per cent. Mr Hirst has already cut the dividend after last October's profits warning, but rebuilding investor confidence will take some time.

Analysts backed the review. Ed Wright at Dresdner Kleinwort Benson said the City was "relieved" the company was going back to basics. Another said Premier was a "growth story with a catalyst to it".

On profit forecasts of £108m for the year almost ended, the shares trade on a forward multiple of 11. This stock has proved a huge disappointment in the recent past, and a full recovery is likely to take some while. But in two years' time this period could look like the turning point.

hold sites in the US. Mr Hirst said: "The conclusion of the last six months' work is that to realise Premier Farnell's full potential, we must run it as a coherent group rather than as an unfocused conglomerate."

Mr Hirst denied that the Premier deal had been a mistake, saying the group would not have won several of its global clients without the increased international scope of its operations.

Outlook positive for software firm

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

MISYS, THE flagship of Britain's fast-growing information technology sector, yesterday dispelled fears of a steep fall in IT investment by banks after the recent spending spree to comply with the euro and the millennium deadlines.

Kevin Lomax, the software group's executive chairman, said that although growth in IT spending would not match last year's rise of 14 per cent, it was set to remain between 6 and 10 per cent in the next three years.

The results came as the company announced the sale of eight non-core companies in its information systems division to Kleinwort Benson's venture capital arm, for around £30m.

Misys said the sale would lead to a £20m charge in the full-year accounts due to a change in accounting rules.

Analysts said that apart from the exceptional charge and the possible costs of integrating a recently bought US company, the outlook for Misys was positive. David Greenall, an analyst with Credit Suisse First Boston, said the shares were better value than rivals such as Sage and SAP of Germany.

Other observers said the stock would receive a fillip from its expected return to the blue-chip FTSE-100 index in March.

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SPORT

Managers and referees must bridge the divide

ARSENÉ WENGER and Dennis Bergkamp complain that referees are prejudiced against Arsenal. Phil Thompson, Liverpool's assistant manager, runs across the Old Trafford pitch to confront the referee Graham Poll. And Jim Smith tells Sky viewers that Oxford United were cheated by Mike Reed's late penalty decision which handed Chelsea a scarcely deserved FA Cup lifeline.

What does all this tell us, apart from the fact that the drama of the Cup remains as compelling as ever; and that the FA Premier League's code of conduct for managers is obviously gathering dust in the corners of most training ground offices? The code says that managers "should take all reasonable steps to ensure that employees accept and observe the authority and decisions of match officials... and should not make public any unfair criticism of any match official."



Graham Kelly, the former chief executive of the Football Association, believes a lack of communication has been undermining the game's officials

Despite the pre-season briefings every year, there remains a disturbing gulf between the playing side of the game and the referees. The respective organisations - the Football Association, the leagues, the League Managers' Association, the Professional Footballers' Association and the referees' leaders - come together two or three times a season to discuss current trends in the game and to maintain good relations, but the message does not

reach those on the ground. Or at least the managers, and through them the players, rarely heed it. Moreover, with the wealth of live coverage on both television and radio (a service which, I hasten to add, I generally very much welcome), an unhealthy attitude has developed. It is not cool ever to take the side of the referee when commenting or interviewing. Even the mildest suggestion that a referee might actually have got a decision

right is ventured ever so tentatively to the expert summariser. The media men - many of them former players and managers - cosy up to their modern-day counterparts.

Incidentally, it was only in 1982 that apprentices began to sit a test on the laws of the game and even that has lapsed somewhat in recent years with pressures on the time of young players. This explains why many expert pundits do not have a full grasp of the laws.

The climate of scorn was not helped by the removal of Paul Danson from Lincoln City's third-round FA Cup tie against Sunderland after protests that his presence might inflame Sunderland fans, who were unhappy that he had sent off two of their players in a previous match. The fact that the FA replaced him said little for Mr Danson and even less for Sunderland supporters.

The behaviour of some of those people who sit - or stand in front

of touchline dug-outs is also an important factor here. Six occupants of the benches at the recent Chelsea v Coventry match have been charged with misconduct over a mêlée after Gordon Strachan held on to the ball. With so many more personnel now occupying dug-outs, clearer rules need to be made, because it can become impossible for the referees. The fourth official does not have the specific authority to deal with the bench - he only "assists the referee" - while in the lower divisions he is often a local official without the stature to do so.

What of the referees themselves? Philip Don, the Premier League's referees' officer, says that in more than 90 per cent of matches referees are being given marks of at least seven out of 10 by the independent observers (who are former referees, managers or players). Is that good enough? If our senior referees are to be as con-

sistently accurate as the best referees from other European leagues, then perhaps Mr Don should be aiming for marks of eight or above in all matches.

After Mike Reed's award of a penalty at Oxford, television replays showed both that Kevin Francis played the ball first and that Gianluca Vialli, moving away from goal, jumped high over the tackle. The tackle was side-on, not from behind, and therefore legal. Was that an eight out of 10 decision?

Dermot Gallagher, meanwhile, did little for the reputation of referees with his naive request for David Ginola's shirt for a charity auction. He should have realised that, at worst, it was placing him under an obligation and, at best, it was an action open to misconstruction.

So what should be done to improve the situation? Firstly, we should put an end to the practice of routinely asking referees to look at

videos to re-examine yellow and red card decisions. What a referee thinks after viewing a video is no longer relevant. The laws of the game provide that the referee's decision is final. Any disciplinary reviews or appeals should be entirely separate and conducted under a different set of procedures, as should any charges laid against players for misconduct which escapes the attention of the match officials.

As for others in the game, I suggest the following. Clubs should be compelled to involve referees in training sessions so as to promote better understanding. Managers should be obliged to attend the seminars referees hold with a view to achieving uniformity. Players (and commentators?) should be required to study the laws of the game. And Arsenal should forget about conspiracy theories and look at the offences for which the red cards were issued.

Elway can confirm his place in history

Denver's legendary quarterback is ready for one more Super Bowl on Sunday. Will it be his last? By Nick Halling in Miami

LIKE THE fighter who does not know when to quit, the ageing rock star who refuses to grow old gracefully, or the dowager who clings to the notion that she has Marilyn Monroe looks, John Elway is in danger of outstaying his welcome.

A year ago, the Denver Broncos quarterback fulfilled a lifelong ambition by guiding his team to an upset victory over the Green Bay Packers in Super Bowl XXXII. Amid intense speculation over his future, Elway vanished from sight, surfacing five months later to announce that, after much deliberation, he would play on for one more year, then hang up the shoulderpads.

However, this has been a frustrating season for the old warrior. First a pulled hamstring, then a lower back problem, meant that he missed parts of six games in 1998. During this period of inactivity, there were hints that he might be reconsidering his options. Now, he was "almost certain" that he would go.

Last week, the Broncos defeated the New York Jets to claim their place here alongside the Atlanta Falcons in Sunday's Super Bowl. It was billed as Elway's final game at Denver's impressive Mile High Stadium, a chance for the player to say goodbye to his admirers, and the 75,000 faithful to give their hero the send-off his efforts merited.

At the finish, Elway did his lap of honour, then mounted a podium to tell the fans that he loved them, and they in turn confirmed that they loved him, tears flowing amid the applause. It seemed the end of an era, although the headlines next day were dominated by what Elway had said to reporters in the locker-room. "I'm not going to make any snap judgements," he said of his future. "I'm going to sit down, talk to my wife and kids, see how I feel physically, and go from there."

It is all in sharp contrast to another gridiron legend, Reggie White of the Green Bay Packers. Like Elway, White said after the Super Bowl that he would give it one more year, then retire. When the Packers lost to the San Francisco 49ers in the play-offs earlier this month, White only walked away from the game he had graced for 13 seasons. Elway, it seems, is reluctant to be the retiring type.

Not surprisingly, the fans want their hero to return. Since joining the team in 1983, Elway has been the Broncos' talisman. The Washington State native enjoys iconic status in Colorado where he, his wife Janet, and their four children have made their home. He is that rare breed of athlete who transcends their chosen sport, becoming synonymous in-state with something far greater.

"John Elway is Denver's Moses," his team-mate Shannon Sharpe said. "He has led Denver out of ob-

scurity into the land of milk and money. I don't think there's ever been a guy in the NFL who symbolised his town like John. If you think of Denver, you don't think of skiing, you think of John Elway. It's always been John, and even if he retires, it will still always be John."

Elway's career had a less than auspicious beginning. After graduating from Stanford University in 1983, he was drafted by the inept Baltimore Colts, but announced that he would never play for them, electing instead to pursue a promising baseball career.

Traditionalists were disgusted but the Colts had little option other than to trade their reluctant property to Denver. "John Elway will never be any good," predicted the Colts owner, Robert Irsay. He struggled at first, but, tellingly, threw three fourth-quarter touchdowns to help the Broncos beat the Colts 21-16. Elway has rarely failed to silence his critics.

Under his guidance, the Broncos went to three Super Bowls in four years in the late 1980s, only to lose them all by heavy margins. But success last year against the Packers confirmed his greatness and, when he takes the field against Atlanta, he will become the first quarterback to start in five Super Bowls.

These days, he no longer carries the team on his shoulders, as much as before. That burden has fallen to Terrell Davis, the prodigiously gifted running back who, after just four seasons, threatens to rewrite the record books every time he touches the ball.

However, Elway remains the man they turn to in a crisis. In last year's Super Bowl, a tense struggle, he sacrificed his body, scrambling desperately for a first down in an effort to keep a crucial drive alive. His 37-year-old body was forced up in the air and spun through 360 degrees as three Green Bay defenders converged on him, but Elway clung on to the ball, and the Broncos had their first down. Davis did the rest, but Elway had provided the inspiration.

It was the same last week against the Jets. Trailing by 10 points in the third quarter, and with an upset brewing, the Broncos finally prevailed thanks to another prodigious effort from Davis. However, Elway's 47-yard pass to Ed McCaffrey provided the spark that had been missing. From that single play, the game's fortunes were overturned, the Jets simply overwhelmed.

"He may be the greatest to have ever played the game at that position," said the former Kansas City coach Marty Schottenheimer who, as coach of the Cleveland Browns in 1987, watched in disbelief as Elway led the Browns 98 yards in 15 plays with 39 seconds left to level the

game, a contest won in overtime by the Broncos. "It doesn't have anything to do with his arm strength or with the people around him. That guy to me is the greatest competitor I have ever witnessed in sport."

Schottenheimer's appraisal is supported by the statistics. At 6ft 5in and weighing 15 stone, Elway has the classic dimensions for a modern-day quarterback. He has achieved more victories, 154, than any other quarterback in history. He has driven his team to 45 game-saving fourth-quarter drives, six of them in post-season play, with the pressure on. He has rushed for close to 4,000 yards, fourth all-time among

quarterbacks. He has completed 4,123 passes for 51,475 yards, figures bettered only by Dan Marino of the Miami Dolphins. His 300 career touchdown passes are surpassed only by Marino and Fran Tarkenton, the former Minnesota Viking.

What separates him from the rest, however, is his command of the huddle. "He's a tremendous leader," Denver's offensive co-ordinator, Gary Kubiak, said. "When you're in his huddle, you know you have to do your job and work hard, or he'll run you out of there."

Unlike running backs and receivers, whose efforts can be measured in large part by statistics,

ranking quarterbacks is largely subjective, but Elway clearly belongs in the élite company of Marino, Joe Montana and Otto Graham. This season has confirmed that while his strength and mobility are greatly diminished, his competitive edge remains sharp, and his decision-making better than ever. Fan polls in Colorado show that the public want him to carry on, although those sentiments are not always echoed within the Broncos' organisation.

"He came back this season for another shot at the Super Bowl, and that's where he's going," Shannon Sharpe said. "That should be the ending."

Only Elway knows his future, and as the build-up to Sunday intensifies, he is keeping his own counsel. "I'm not even thinking about that," he said. "I don't want to take the focus off what we're doing, and that's to win the football game. What I'm doing next year, that's not even entering my head. This is what I came back for, and I'm thrilled to death to be going back."

Should the Broncos prevail, as expected, then the temptation to return may prove too great to resist. No team has ever won three Super Bowls in a row. Elway, the ultimate competitor, will relish the challenge.

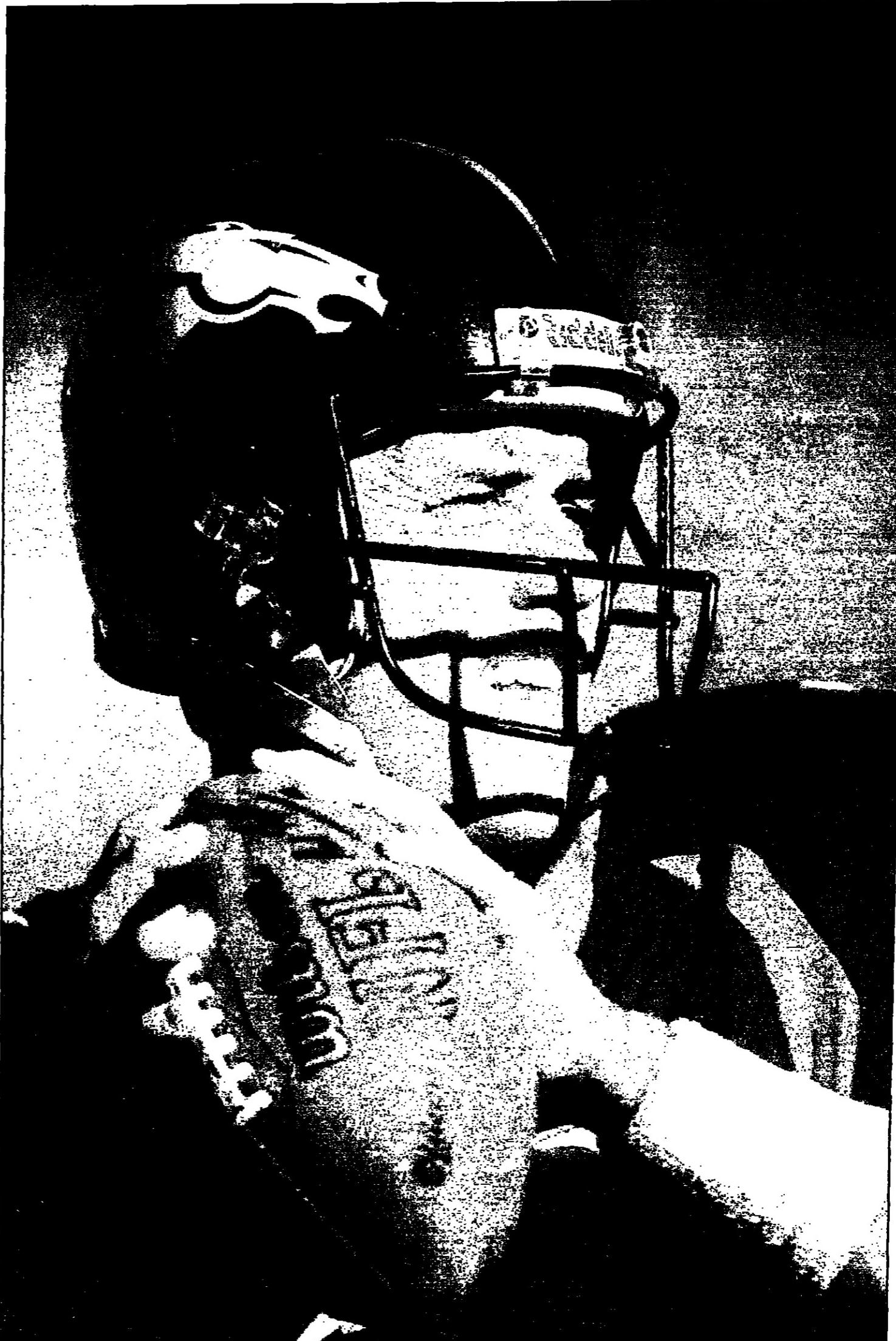
"When they finally got Dan Reeves I knew things would really turn around for us. I just didn't imagine that it would happen this fast," Tugge said. "This year we made believers out of everybody. This was a magical, special year."

Still, when Tugge takes a step back to survey all the pre-Super Bowl media circus he cannot quite believe it is actually happening to him. "It all felt like a dream at first when we went to Minnesota and beat the Vikings," Tugge said of Atlanta's overtime victory in the heart-stopping NFC title game. "You're lying on the floor there and your team-mates are jumping on you and crying. Can you believe it? We're going to Miami! All of a sudden, you feel like you're in a dream world."

"All those guys who were there for is for them."

John Elway: "This is what I came back for, and I'm thrilled to death to be going back"

Allsport



Tugge tastes good life at last

BY BILL BERKROT

THE AWARD for the happiest man in Miami for Super Bowl XXXIII must go to Jessie Tugge. For 12 years, the Atlanta Falcons linebacker has been one of the NFL's best kept secrets, spending his entire career with a team that gained so little respect they were hardly noticed even in Atlanta - until this season.

On Sunday, the five-time Pro-Bowl selection finally manages to showcase his talents before a worldwide audience on the game's greatest stage when his Falcons side take on the defending champions, the Denver Broncos.

"This has been such a long time coming for me," he said. "A lot of people say you play for the money but it's not true." Tugge, the NFL's leading tackler among active players with 1,582, added: "You play for pride, you play for respect and you play to get to the Super Bowl. Everybody wants to make it to the show."

"You got to talk to the young guys because they think: 'OK, man, I'm a rookie, hey, it's easy to get to the Super Bowl. This is going to happen four or five times in my career.' Let me tell you, this don't come around very often." Tugge knows the truth of that statement - it took the Falcons 33 years to get to the title game for the first time.

"There have been many times when I thought it would never happen. We had so many guys who played for this franchise longer than me, who played 17, 18 years, and they never did make it. It didn't come easy," said Tugge, who has racked up more than 100 tackles for 11 consecutive seasons.

The durable linebacker, who has missed just one game in his entire career, is many things, but a quitter is not one of them. In this era of team-hopping free agency, Tugge simply refused to give up on the lowly Falcons. "I didn't want to take the easy way out," said the Georgia native, who joined the Falcons as an undrafted free agent in 1987. "To say 'let me jump teams so I can be a winner' was never part of my mentality. I wanted to be a part of the solution for the Atlanta Falcons."

Of all the bad times, and there were many, Tugge cites the 1996 season as rock bottom. Coming off a year in which the Falcons had made the play-offs, Tugge had reason to believe the club were going in the right direction, only to watch them self-destruct with a dismal 3-13 campaign. Then, though, a new coach with a history of success came to the rescue.

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"All those guys who were there for is for them."

Telfer's problems mount

RUGBY UNION
BY CHRIS HEWETT

POOR OLD Scotland. When Jim Telfer and his fellow movers and shakers north of the border decided to relieve the southern hemisphere of some of its unwanted talent, they were hoping to expand their Five Nations horizons rather than their medical bill. Frustratingly, two of their more influential imports, Matthew Proudfoot and Gordon Simpson, are definitely out of next weekend's championship opener with Wales at Murrayfield and may also miss the follow-up game at Twickenham.

Proudfoot, the tight-head prop from South Africa whose 20-stone frame effectively doubles the size of the Scottish front

row, has yet to regain full match fitness following a serious neck injury suffered during the European Cup match between Edinburgh Reivers and Toulouse in October. Simpson, a distinctly handy flanker from All Black country who toured Australia with his new countrymen last summer, is still a yard short of a gallop after recovering from a persistent pelvic problem.

A third obvious first choice, the centre Jamie Mayer, is also out of the running for the Wales match because of groin trouble,

but the Scots can at least point to the return of Glenn Metcalfe, another New Zealander, after shoulder surgery. If Metcalfe regains the full-back position, Telfer might well move Gregor Townsend, who now plays his club rugby in France, to his optimum position of outside-half.

Paul Burnell will again fill in for Proudfoot, but Simpson's absence leaves Telfer with the task of picking two wing forwards from Peter Walton, Martin Leslie and Budge Pountney. The coach must make a further decision on the captaincy, between the incumbent, Bryan Redpath, and his great scrum-half rival, Gary Armstrong.

Injuries aside, Telfer's 22-man squad is not without its high-profile absences. Tony Stanger, one of the most prolific try-scoring backs in Scottish history, and Craig Chalmers, the long-serving outside-half from Melrose, failed to make the cut. Rob Wainwright, of course, has retired from international rugby. Ulster, meanwhile, left their fortress of Ravenhill for the home-from-home surroundings of Dublin yesterday to begin their final preparations for tomorrow's European Cup final with Colomiers.

They left the club telephone lines back in Belfast jammed with last-minute ticket hunters

- the callers were acting more in hope than expectation, given that Lansdowne Road was sold out a week ago - and the Republic was expecting the deluge of 30,000-plus northerners to begin in earnest this evening.

Almost unnoticed, the French underdogs from the suburbs of Toulouse also pitched up in Dublin yesterday. Their coach, Jacques Brunel, was still not 100 per cent sure of his starting line-up, largely because Fabien Galthie, his international scrum-half, has been struggling for fitness since failing to last out the semi-final victory over Perpignan. However, Jean-Luc Sadourny, one of

the world's outstanding full-backs, will captain a side containing a second experienced Test hand in Marc Del Mal, the brilliant hooker from Agen. Brunel plans to play his favoured back-row combination - the blind-side flanker Bernard De Giusti, the six-eighth Patrick Tabacco and the No 8 Stéphane Peysson - for a ninth consecutive time in European Cup competition. Gildas Moro, Colomiers' effective second row, is also likely to complete a full band of European appearances.

SCOTLAND SQUAD In Water Plus Racers' Challenge Cup, Edinburgh, 6 Feb: Backs: S. Stanger (Edinburgh), P. Burnell (London), S. Galthie (Glasgow), P. Wainwright (Edinburgh), M. Leslie (Ulster), C. Chalmers (Colomiers), D. Hilton (Bath), M. Leslie (Edinburgh), S. Murray (Bedford), R. Walton (Bath), J. Mayer (Lancaster), J. L. Sadourny (Colomiers), M. Del Mal (Agen), S. Peysson (Gonesse Colomiers), P. Tabacco (Newcastle Falcons), G. Moro (Glasgow Warriors).



McRae ready to test his men

RUGBY LEAGUE

BY DAVE HADFIELD

SHAUN MCRAE, the Gateshead Thunder coach, has warned the game not to expect too much from his newly assembled side on its first outing tonight.

The new Super League club play Castleford at Wheldon Road, but McRae, the former St Helens coach who has been given the task of moulding them into a team, says that the result is not crucial. "I think it's more important to Castleford than to us. Stuart Raper has told me that he will be fielding his strongest side. They have five new players and a Challenge Cup tie coming up in two weeks, so we have to expect a bit of a barrage," he said.

"For us, it is a matter of everyone getting 40 minutes football, including some players from whom I don't know what to expect." Those unknown quantities include Epi Taione, an 18 stone Tongan winger introduced to the club by Vaiiga Thigamala, and several local triathletes who are the product of amateur rugby league in the North-east.

Gateshead's extensive colony of Australians will also get their first taste of playing together, with McRae looking for the combinations that will help his side establish their credentials quickly when Super League kicks off in March.

Gateshead are not competing in the Challenge Cup and will have just one more friendly before meeting Leeds in their first league game on 7 March. "There's some responsibility on me as captain," said Kerrod Walters, the former Australian Test hooker who is the Thunder's most experienced player. "But there's a responsibility on all the players to see how quickly we can get."

Walters was also captain of the new franchise at the Adelaide Rams during their brief, two-year existence, but says that the mood at Gateshead is more like that at Brisbane, when the Broncos were embarking on their climb to the top of the Australian game.

"You've got to get things right off the field as well, and I feel we're doing that in Gateshead," Walters said.

Castleford will give debuts to three new imports, James Pickering, Aaron Raper and Dale Fritz, whilst the Great Britain centre Alan Hunt will make his first appearance for Warrington against his old club, St Helens, tonight.

Wigan, who are to discuss the possibility of John Monie extending the year he has left on his coaching contract, may bring their former coach, Graeme West, back to Central Park as one of his assistants. West was sacked as coach of Widnes last year and has since been working outside the game.

The Rugby League's annual meeting today will discuss the difficulty in finding dates for the Five Nations internationals this season, now that a 30-game Super League season necessitates midweek games. "We hope that a solution can be found, but it is starting to become urgent," said a League spokesman.

Lydney look to the heavens for support

Saracens must tread carefully in the Forest of Dean in Sunday's Tetley's Bitter Cup tie. By David Llewellyn

THE VIDEOS should have come with a double X certificate. They were provided by Richard Hill, Gloucester's director of rugby, for the unsuspecting Rhodri Lewis, coach of Lydney. They all featured Saracens, Lydney's opponents on Sunday in the Tetley's Bitter Cup fifth round, the furthest the Forest of Dean side has been in the knock-out competition.

But they came without any warning and, after watching the recording of the match between Saracens and Gloucester, Lewis, the former Wales international flanker, said: "There are times when I wish Richard had not sent the videos. I have watched them all and the second half of the Gloucester match is still giving me nightmares."

In fact, since it is Saracens who have to do the travelling, there is every chance they may finish on the receiving end of an unpleasant surprise.

Lydney may be dawdling around the middle of the Jewson National League One table, but they are no slouches, especially not on their own turf.

The Forest has produced some seriously talented players over the years and to a man they have always been hard. Particularly up front, an area of the game that is as much of a dark unknown as the Forest itself. One of those front-row denizens is Nick Nelmes, born and brought up in Lydney.

It is some seven stones since hooker Nelmes began his Lydney career as an Under-13; now, some 20 years later, this Gloucester-based tax inspector is preparing for one of the most exciting days of his, and the town's, rugby life.

"There is no doubt about it," the 32-year-old Nelmes says, who now weighs in at 15 stone plus, "this is the biggest rugby occasion I have ever been involved in. I don't think there has been anything to top this. The town has been buzzing since the draw was made."

Mind you, he is not expecting miracles. "Our aim is to surprise them," Nelmes adds, "but let's be honest, the days of the



Nick Nelmes, the Lydney hooker, talks tactics: 'We need three or four inches of mud. If it doesn't rain before Sunday, maybe we'll call in the fire brigade.' Peter Jay

real shocks are going. Sides like Saracens prepare far too well. They will know something about us and these are professionals. They train all week.

"We train two nights a week. Tuesday and Thursday. And although our training and preparation is more intensive than it used to be, I don't think anyone at our level watches their intake of alcohol all that closely, for example."

Like Nelmes, Lewis, who played for the club until a while back, is a realist. "The two sides are worlds apart," he explains. "We can't compete with full-time professionals. I get the guys for maybe three hours

a week. We do our best in the circumstances and we certainly played well away against Moseley in the last round."

They won that one by a point, with wing Chris Dunlop scoring two tries for the second successive Cup tie. But there will be a lot riding on their leading points and try scorer Nick Paisley, who was named Jewson Player of the Month in December.

When it comes down to it, the biggest thing Lydney have going for them is the fact that they will be at fortress Regentsholme. They nearly pulled off a historic victory there against Sale back in 1981. "I was

a ball-boy," Nelmes remembers. Lydney even led until the final few minutes. "Then Steve Smith sneaked over for a try," Nelmes adds, "and that was that."

Another crucial factor could well be the conditions. Lydney need mud. Plenty of it. Unfortunately the rain which has been hosing down for much of the winter has let up in the last few days, according to Nelmes, who says: "What we need is three or four inches of mud."

"And if it doesn't rain again between now and Sunday maybe we'll have to call in the fire brigade. That's what London Welsh thought had hap-

pened when they turned up to play us once in the Cup a while back. It was a glorious day but the pitch had not fully dried and the Welsh moaned about the state of things. In the bar afterwards, having drawn 17-17, we were toasting the fire brigade and saying what a good job they had done, and the Welsh swallowed it."

It is unlikely to come down to that, but Saracens can certainly expect a noisy reception. Lewis again: "The ground will be jam-packed. There has been tremendous interest in the tie and no one ever finds it easy to play us here. At home there is a certain spirit whoever we

play and that will come to the fore against Saracens."

"I just hope they enjoy the experience and learn from this. They are looking forward to coming up against some of the best players in the world."

Someone who will be jammed among the Forest fanatics on Sunday will be their former full-back Steve James, the Glamorgan and England batsman. He played in the No 15 short as recently as three seasons ago, but since the two sports sit uneasily alongside each other and James is reluctant to risk injury, he is content to join his parents, Peter and Margaret, in the stands.

"I may not play for Lydney any more, but I always follow their fortunes," James insists. "And I watch them whenever I can. There is a real passion for rugby in this area."

He is close to confessing that he would like to be out there on Sunday, playing his heart out with the other local heroes, "but then I get this picture of François Pienaar running at me!"

James must have known that the first Springbok captain would be making his first appearance of the year for Saracens and the alarm bells sounded. Or was it the fire brigade?

IOC considers selective bans

DRUGS IN SPORT

THE OFFICIAL in charge of the International Olympic Committee's drugs programme proposed selective bans yesterday to keep doping offenders out of certain - but not all - major events.

Prince Alexandre de Mérode, the chairman of the IOC medical commission, also said that the IOC will seek a compromise on its proposal for a two-year minimum ban for major drug abusers.

In an attempt to keep athletes from successfully challenging sanctions in civil courts, De Mérode said that the IOC will seek to impose bans that keep athletes out of some of the biggest competitions, while allowing them to stay active in the sport to make a living.

"It will be financial and moral punishment, and it will be severe, but it will not rob him of his work," De Mérode said. His comments came just days ahead of next week's world conference on doping in sport

Nicol is cut down by Power

SQUASH

JONATHON POWER, who upset the seedings in Doha when he beat Peter Nicol to become world champion, upset them again when he repeated the victory in the Tournament of Champions in New York.

The third-seeded Canadian won in four games six weeks ago in the world final, but on Wednesday night he beat the top-seeded Scot 15-10, 15-5, 15-4, in a surprisingly one-sided semi-final. Indeed, after Nicol had led 9-5 in the first game it was the most one-sided of all their contests.

Power was able to win more through weight and pace and less through his trademark disguises and flicks.

Power now meets the second-seeded Egyptian, Ahmed Barada, who had a tough semi-final with the fourth-seeded Englishman, Paul Johnson, before winning 15-10, 7-15, 17-14, 14-17, 15-8, in fully 100 minutes.

Smells and swells for straggler Saito

SAILING

BY STUART ALEXANDER

heart attacks and has sailed around the world twice since selling his Tokyo petrol station 14 years ago.

Saito took 52 days, twice as long as the leg winner, the Italian Giovanni Soldini, to complete the 7,000 miles (11,000 km) from Cape Town to Auckland.

Along the way he celebrated his 65th birthday and remains on course to become the oldest sailor to complete the race.

The fact his 50ft yacht, the Shuten-don, was a little smelly on arrival in Auckland harbour was blamed on a freezer that broke down 15 days out from South Africa.

"I had many meats - chicken, pork, beef, tuna. They all go off. I have a very, very bad smell on board now," said Saito, whose priority on stepping ashore was a cold beer.

However, the problem did not worry the veteran yachtsman, who has survived five

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BULGARIA

Pamporovo 100% Needs fresh snow

Canada

Whistler 100% Packed, groomed 285

FRANCE

Chamonix 95% Fresh snow

Mottaret 100% High slopes good

ITALY

Cervinia 90% Good skiing

Madesimo 100% Valle di Lei good

NORWAY

Gello 100% Good snow cover

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Leyzin 100% Fresh snow

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Rebellion rouses the Stoke faithful

STOKE CITY fans are revolting. What's more, the man spearheading the rank-and-file rebellion against the Second Division club's ruling élite is an aficionado of heavy metal.

Lester Hughes runs a steel fabrication works little more than a hefty clearance from the Britannia Stadium. At least, he did, until he launched a supporters' consortium aimed at buying out Stoke's majority shareholders. Since then, he admits the day job has been neglected and he is up until 2am answering letters, faxes and e-mails promising money.

Before tonight's visit of Manchester City - themselves no strangers to restless-native syndrome - Hughes will again be handing out pledge forms. With the campaign in its third week, the running total is on the way to £200,000, a tenth of the target he set to demonstrate the

depth of feeling for Stoke and against the board he holds responsible for "13 years of serious decline".

The response, according to Hughes, has been "overwhelming". At last Saturday's game with Colchester United, he did not have to press his leaflets on anybody, so eagerly were they being seized. Stoke's 300-strong Scandinavian supporters' club expect to generate £50,000. One delivery of post this week brought a £1,000 pledge from a Dutch "Stoke". Another exile, from Somerset, could offer only £5, yet Hughes views both as declarations of the same devotion that drives him on.

Sitting in the shrine to the red and white stripes that doubles as his office, the 52-year-

old former welder explained why he is sparking a challenge to Keith Humphreys and Peter Coates, the Stoke chairman and his predecessor respectively. "The club were in the top division a couple of years before Coates took over. We're now in our second spell in the third grade of English football."

"We've got a Premiership manager [Brian Little] working on a Conference budget. The club don't own the new ground, which was developed by others. They had to borrow to fund their 49 per cent of its cost, and to pay off the debts they've asset-stripped the team. Every decent player has been sold, and only a tiny percentage of the revenue reinvested in the team."

The word Hughes is keen to impress upon possible purchasers - and he has corresponded with Richard Branson, among others - is potential. Having followed the Potters for 40 years, he remembers the second coming of Stanley Matthews, gates of 40,000 under Tony Waddington's genial management, and the team including Alan Hudson which challenged for the League title in the 1970s. Now the "greatness", as he puts it, is gone.

"For the past six years I've tried to put together a consortium of businessmen to buy this pair out. I'm trying again because I'm desperate for the club to succeed. I can't understand why the likes of Fulham, Reading and even Rushden &

Diamonds can attract multimillionaires. Why can't Stoke with far greater potential?"

Working on the basis that there is a bedrock of 10,000 diehards (which he maintains could be the tip of the iceberg), Hughes set about trying to raise a minimum of £200 from each. The figure of £2m, less than a tenth of what Mark Goldberg paid for Crystal Palace, is largely symbolic, intended to show would-be buyers what a viable concern Stoke could be.

He is under no illusions that if the target were achieved, season-ticket holders would storm the boardroom like so many replica-shirted Bolsheviks. A realistic role model is the alliance of supporters and the business community which res-

cued Bournemouth from receivership.

"We need enough not only to buy the shares but to take the club forward after Humphreys and Coates have gone," he said. "I've got the club, invest in the team and pay off the debts, we could be looking at a minimum of £10m."

"I've always said that the business people who come in will be the ones who run the club, though I'd want supporter representation on the board. But first we've got to show these two their time's up. Humphreys went on the radio in response to me, saying they would talk to anyone who wanted to invest in Stoke. We don't want that: we want people to purchase their shares so they can put money in when they've got it."

In the meantime, Hughes will keep putting his heart and



Hughes: Raising funds

"A few people reckon I'm just on an ego trip. It's sad that they're so negative. This is positive," Hughes added, "and Brian Little will tell you it's not hurting the football. It's got nothing to do with my wanting to be chairman, or even a director. I've got enough on my plate without that!"

"I just want to appeal to anyone out there to let me show them the massive potential of Stoke City. All it needs is investment."

"We might fail, but if we didn't try it would be defeatism - and we've had years of that already."

■ *Stoke City Supporters' Consortium can be contacted in four different ways. By phone: 01782 333557; by fax: 01782 746009; by post: S&H Ltd, Unit 15, Hyde Park, City Road, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 1DE; or by e-mail: lhu7751207@aol.com*

Pride of Suffolk on Vase quest

NON-LEAGUE NOTEBOOK

BY RUPERT METCALF

THE LAST Suffolk club to play at Wembley was not Ipswich Town but Sudbury Town, who reached the FA Vase final in 1989.

Sudbury Town drew 1-1 with Tamworth in front of a crowd of 26,487, the biggest ever for a Vase final, before losing the replay 3-0 at Peterborough. In subsequent years the Priory Stadium club rose as high as the Premier Division of the Dr Martens League, and two seasons ago they beat Brighton and Hove Albion in the first round of the FA Cup.

At the end of that 1996-97 campaign, though, Sudbury Town resigned from the Dr Martens for financial reasons, and returned to the Jewson Eastern League. Once they were unquestionably the top non-League club in Suffolk, now they may not even be the top side in Sudbury.

A mile up the River Stour from the Priory is Brundun Lane, the home of Town's Jewson League rivals Sudbury Wanderers. Tomorrow, while Town battle for Premier Division points against Diss Town (a Norfolk team who won the Vase in 1994), Wanderers will be on the Cumbrian coast taking on Workington in the last 16 of the Vase.

Sudbury Town fell at the fourth-round stage of the Vase, losing to an extra-time goal at home to Northwood, but there is another Suffolk side in the fifth round, Woodbridge Town entertain Camberley Town, from Surrey, at their Notcutts Park ground tomorrow.

Woodbridge have several links to the Sudbury Town side which reached the 1989 Vase final. Their manager is Dave Hubrick, who scored six goals in 26 League games for Wimborne in the early 80s and also hit Sudbury Town's Wembley goal against Tamworth.

Hubrick's assistant is Gary Barker, who captained the 1988 Sudbury Town side. Three other Priory team-mates then were Dean Garnham, who now keeps goal for Woodbridge, plus Marty Thorpe and Craig Oldfield, who are both squad players at Notcutts Park. They all share the same dream - marking the 10th anniversary of their first Wembley visit with a return trip.

There will be a reunion prior to the Vase tie at Dunston Federation Brewery tomorrow. The Tyneside club's manager, Bobby Scaife, appeared in the same Middlestrough youth and reserve teams as David Armstrong, who went on to play for England and is now the commercial manager of Lyngton & New Milton, Dunston's opponents from Hampshire.

Two clubs known as the Motormen have reached the last 16 of the Vase. Vauxhall GM, from Ellesmere Port, travel to Oxfordshire to take on Thame United, while Ford United, from Romford, entertain Bedlington Terriers. Both sides reached the first round of the FA Cup this term: Ford lost at Preston North End while Bedlington thrashed Colchester United.

The Vase holders, Tiverton Town, visit Bedford Town, while Taunton Town, along with "Tivvy" the other West Country Vase contenders, entertain Northwood.

Winchester rediscovered his touch

ROGER WINCHESTER, whose career took such a nose-dive that he was forced to sell his home and was on the verge of giving up the game, continued to pick himself up off the floor yesterday.

Delighted just to be back on the European Tour he left in 1993 due to a lack of success, the 31-year-old from Devon was even happier after starting the Heineken Classic at The Vines here with a seven-under par 65. He goes into the second round level with the world No 5, Ernie Els, and only one behind the leader, Jarmo Sandelin of Sweden.

Winchester made his move with five successive birdies around the turn and then closed with another. Comparisons between him and Nick Faldo were inevitably made in 1985 when he won the English amateur title at the age of 18 - a decade after Faldo had done the same - and he took them a stage further.

"I tried to model myself on Faldo," he said. "David Leadbetter became my coach when I was at college in Florida and I used to play with Nick a bit. But I completely lost my way. I got far too technical and there were times when I wanted to give up because I was so confused with what I was doing."

"It was terrible financially too - it still is. I had a house in Wimbledon that I had to sell because I couldn't afford the mortgage and right now I'm renting a room in a house in London for £40 a week."

"It's difficult to break even on the Challenge Tour and it was a huge relief to finish fourth on that last year and so give myself another chance on the main Tour."

Winchester has been helped by a renowned American sports psychologist, Bob Rotella, whom he wrote to in despera-

GOLF
BY MARK GARROD
in Perth

tion. "I've learnt that everybody is different. I mean, you don't see Woosie trying to play like Faldo, do you? He's got his own personality."

"As long as I can keep doing the same thing day in, day out hopefully things will keep improving for me."

Sandelin missed Padraig Harrington's Vines course record by just one shot. Sandelin grabbed no fewer than nine birdies in a round he rated one of the best of his life.

However, Els is an even firmer favourite for the first prize of £108,000 after collecting seven birdies himself. The winner of the South African PGA championship two weeks ago, Els is keen to keep pace with 59-shooter David Duval - a double champion on the US Tour already.

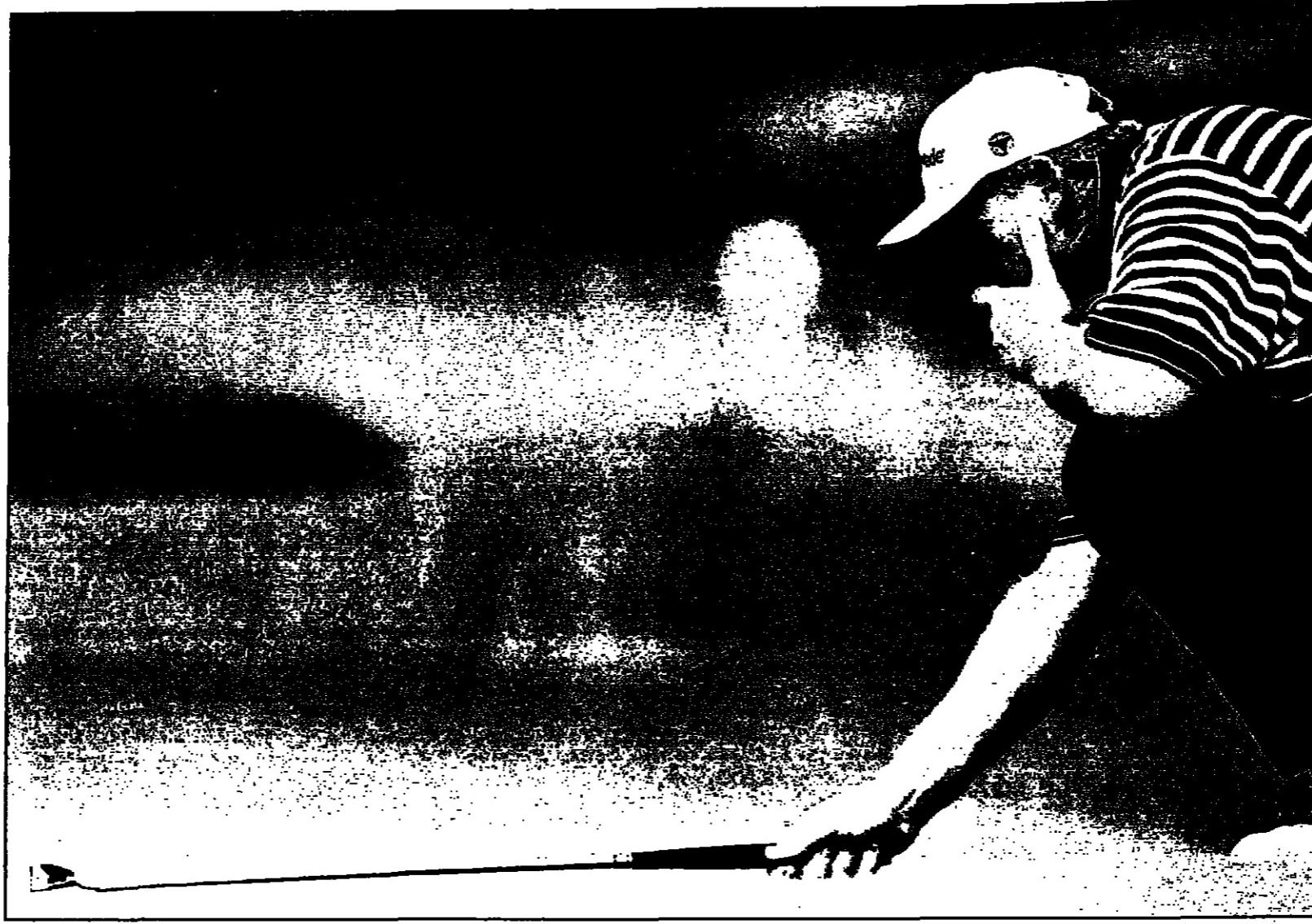
Scotland's Andrew Coltart opened with a 66 for a share of fourth place as he began his bid for a third success Down Under, having won the Australian PGA title in Sydney in 1994 and 1997.

This event counts for the Ryder Cup qualifying table and another win would probably get the 28-year-old into the 40-man field for the Anderssen Consulting World Match Play Championship in California next month.

Currently seventh in the Ryder Cup table and 74th in the world rankings, Coltart matched Els by not dropping a stroke and scored six birdies in his last 12 holes.

Sam Torrance is 14 shots off the lead after requiring painkillers for the shoulder injury which forced him to drop out of last week's South African Open.

Scores, Digest, page 29



Allsport

Monty expects tough Ryder Cup

BY ANDY FARRELL

AMERICA'S DISMAL performance in the Presidents Cup - when they were comprehensively thrashed by the likes of Ernie Els, Nick Price and Greg Norman, not forgetting Shigeki Maruyama of Japan, playing under the collective banner of an International team - does not guarantee Europe victory in this September's Ryder Cup, according to Colin Montgomerie.

The man who has led the Order of Merit for the last six years and secured the victory at Valderrama in the last Ryder Cup 18 months ago, is not expecting a walkover at La Costa, near San Diego, in next month's Ander森 Consulting World Match Play Championship.

Montgomerie first faces the Americans on home soil in the head-to-head version of the game at La Costa, near San Diego, in next month's Ander森 Consulting World Match Play Championship.

The Scot is nominally the de-

fending champion, but the event has evolved to become one of three new tournaments which are meant to be next to the majors in importance. Montgomerie sees them as a chance to boost his world ranking from ninth and challenge the No 1, Tiger Woods, as well as David Duval, who shot a 59 last Sunday to win his second successive event. "There are no excuses now," he said. "We are playing on a level playing field now."

Monty will do so without his mentor, Bill Ferguson, who rescued the Scot from a mid-season slump but has been jettisoned for the second time. Denying the move was motivated by money, as had been reported, Montgomerie said: "I

am happy with what I am doing. Bill and I remain close friends, and have spoken since and will again. I feel I can go it alone for a while but that does not mean forever. The door is not closed. I am looking to see who can help me on certain aspects of the game. I already work with Dave Pelz on my chipping and putting, and that is a key thing as regards scoring."

Gary Player's intention to make the 2001 Open at Royal Lytham his 46th and last appearance in the championship will rest on the Royal and Ancient changing their exemption rules, as they did for Arnold Palmer in 1995. The R&A altered the age limit on past champions from "under-65" to

"65 and under" just to let Palmer bow out at St Andrews four years ago.

But the rule was immediately changed back again and did not become permanent as Player, who won the third of his Open titles at Lytham in 1974, hoped. "Maybe Gary is hoping we will change the rule again," David Hill, secretary of the championship committee, said. "And maybe we will."

Jack Nicklaus will be out for three months after a hip replacement operation, thus breaking his record of 40 consecutive appearances in the US Masters. Nicklaus, the winner of six Masters titles, had been suffering from a degenerative problem in his left hip.

Warren wants apology from Hamed

FRANK WARREN has demanded an apology from Naseem Hamed for saying he had been "exploited and manipulated" by the promoter on Michael Parkinson's BBC1 chat show. Warren's solicitors have written to Hamed, the BBC and Parkinson, insisting on an apology from all three.

When Parkinson asked Hamed during last Friday's show if he thought he had been manipulated and exploited, the World Boxing Organisation featherweight champion replied: "Definitely. I did. Yes."

Warren said yesterday: "I want an apology from Parkinson,

BOXING

BY ANDY FARRELL

During the interview Parkinson said to Hamed: "You're being looked after by your brother and all the rest of your family. Does that make you feel more secure?"

Hamed replied: "Definitely. I know exactly what's coming in and what's going out and obviously my family is blood and I know that I can trust them with everything. For once in my life I can control my own destiny and what I want to do and what I want to achieve." Hamed, who

officially parted company with Warren last week, was steered to the world title by Warren in September 1995.

He [Hamed] has earned about £12m from boxing and his commercial activities, selling him to the youth market and that success was down to us," Warren said. "Greed has destroyed our relationship. We began in 1994 and I doubled his wages. He earned just over £500,000 the following year and when we signed a new contract in 1996 I stepped up his money again. So I cannot say how disappointed I was with the Parkinson show.

The rift began when Riath,

Hamed's brother, became involved. Riath had no impact before Naz became world champion. Naz was then getting 10 to 12 times the money other top featherweights were getting. I should know because I was doing the deals."

Riath, also Hamed's business manager, said: "We don't want to be dragged into any sort of press war with Frank Warren. He was very helpful and we are grateful for that. The situation is that we want our independence and both parties have got separate ways to go."

The relationship with Warren ended after the unbeaten

England aim for the title

HOCKEY

BY BILL COLWILL

NOTHING SHORT of the gold medal should satisfy England in Prague this weekend in the Women's Under-21 European Indoor Championship. With Germany, Spain and the Dutch not contesting the event, England, who in the previous three competitions have second twice and third, must start as favourites to reach Sunday's final, where they would expect to meet the host nation.

It is, however, worrying that France, who finished in bottom place in 1997, beat England, playing at Manchester, 6-3 in the World Cities Tournament in Perth last weekend. The French will provide the opposition for England's second game this afternoon. England play Slovakia this morning in their opening game and complete the pool programme tomorrow morning against Belarus.

England will rely heavily on the captain, Clifton's Lisa Wood, to lead by example along with their three full internationals: Isabel Palmer, Helen Richardson and Kate Walsh.

Tina Cullen, while expressing confidence that her side will win the play-offs and return to Europe, expressed her disappointment at the timing of the event. "As a club we are being penalised for bringing on youngsters but we are quite confident," she said.

With Cullen and Denise Marston-Smith in devastating form in front of goal they may once again be able to outgun Slough, Chelmsford and Bracknell. Karen Brown, a veteran of so many indoor battles, will be missing from the Slough line-up.

Box office proves Tyson's drawing power

THOUGH HE is clearly no longer the fighter of old, Mike Tyson is still proving a knockout at the box office. Figures released by the Nevada Athletic Commission showed Tyson's comeback fight against the South African Francois Botha to be the sixth biggest attendance in the state's history.

The Commission said 10,221 people paid full ticket prices to watch the fight at the MGM

Grand hotel-casino. The fight grossed \$7,051,800 (£4.3m) at the gate, dashing predictions by many before the bout that ticket sales would be poor.

The attendance trounced only four other Tyson fights and the first Oscar De La Hoya-Julio Cesar Chavez bout for gate money. The biggest grossing fight in Nevada history was Tyson's infamous biting of Evander Holyfield, which gen-

erated \$14,277,200. "When you compare him to anybody else it's unbelievable," Marc Rather, the commission's executive director, said.

Tyson's ability to draw fans to his fifth-round knockout of Botha was even more impressive because the bout on 18 January was sandwiched between two big Las Vegas weekends and the fight promotion was hastily put together. An

SPORT

WINCHESTER FIRES 65 P28 • ELWAY'S DATE WITH DESTINY P24

Ranatunga let off with light penalty

CRICKET

By STEPHEN BRENKLEY
in Perth

tantamount to saying that players can do what they like.

Ranatunga, charged with five breaches of the ICC code, was found guilty of the first (nothing was said about the others) in that he did not at all times maintain the spirit of the game besides the laws of the game.

He denounced the involvement of lawyers in imposing the discipline of the game and reserved his most telling comments for Ranatunga himself.

As the humility of Van der Merwe's tone and the weariness in his announcement made clear, the game is the poorer for what has happened this week. Swift remedial action is demanded but this has rarely been the International Cricket Council's forte. They may not know where to start.

After a hearing of some four hours at the Waca ground in Perth, most of it taken up by lawyers, Van der Merwe sombrely announced the verdict and the relatively light sentence on Ranatunga for his unworthy behaviour in his side's Carlton & United Series match against England last Saturday after the off-spinner, Muttiah Muralitharan, was sensationally no balled for throwing.

Ranatunga was fined 75 per cent of his match fee, the maximum possible, and banned for six matches, also the maximum, but the suspension has been suspended for 12 months. The amount of cash is not known since Sri Lanka have a scale of sliding match fees.

If he is found guilty of any other breach of the ICC's code of conduct in that time, he will have the ban imposed as well as any other sanction for the new offence. Or not, naturally, if he hires a decent legal team. Considering the nature of Ranatunga's crimes - wagging his finger at the umpire, jabbing him in the chest, delaying the match for 15 minutes, telling the umpire where he should stand - it was

"I have no doubt that the ICC will take note of this hearing and

More cricket, page 27

the way it has been conducted and that this green covered book [Code of Conduct] will find a lot of amendments in the next edition," Van der Merwe said.

Offences do not come much more bang to rights than Ranatunga's. They were all captured on film in a match which descended into downright ugliness after Muralitharan was called by Emerson. Ranatunga was involved in the aftermath but, as the match grew closer later, tensions erupted. Players pushed and shoved each other and both sides were culpable.

Perhaps Van der Merwe made it difficult for himself by charging only Ranatunga when he could have collared three or four others including Stewart, who walked into Upul Chandana with his shoulder. That outraged the Sri Lankans, who were already feeling wronged.

They called in the lawyers. When they heard that Emerson had been absent from his job with a stress-related condition and was withdrawn by the Australian Cricket Board from standing in further matches in the Triangular one-day series, they probably hired another one.

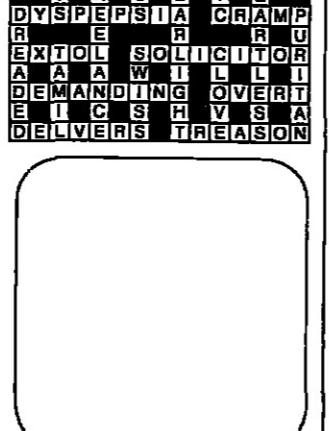
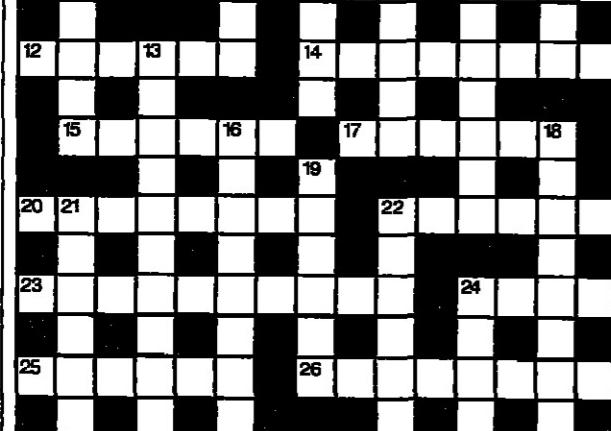
Van der Merwe, at first perplexed by this, postponed the hearing for 24 hours and then had to adjourn it the following day after "certain legal representations". This was the third go at administering justice. He said: "Mr Ranatunga expressed regret at the embarrassment he had caused his opponents, the public and the officials and he has been warned that his every action will be very, very closely monitored over the next 12 months."

Van der Merwe deserved his most incisive comments for the Sri Lankan and, if the captain cares about the game as much as he appears to, they will weigh on him heavily. "I would like to say that the unfortunate happening has cost Mr Ranatunga a great deal in the popularity stakes and respect is something, I told him, that both he and I will lose by this decision." At last, dignity.

The unseeded Amelie Mauresmo celebrates after causing one of the great shocks in Australian Open history by beating the world No 1, Lindsay Davenport, to reach the women's final Report, page 29; Photograph: AFP

THE FRIDAY CROSSWORD

No.3832 Friday 29 January by Spurius Thursday's solution



- ACROSS**
- Like dirty carpets Victor described? (8)
 - Usual sort of conquest mostly associated with onset of love (6)
 - Plans to bring back luncheon meat (4)
 - Place to go, maybe, when one's surrounded, on the defensive (10)
 - County associating itself with appeal for accommodation (6)
 - He used to run on the football field (8)
 - Little time in town to obtain headgear (6)
 - Set which incorporates a splendid house (6)
 - Medicine given girl, one held by mother (8)
 - Party over, time to fit in (8)
- DOWN**
- Worker holding article found in monkey's foot (8)
 - Left out state paper (4)
 - Narrow interpretation of artist? (6)
 - Problem predicted for Macbeth, none of the rest (8)
 - Grass initially rough in
 - home improvements - that's eccentric (6)
 - Sort of field in which bridge foursome's held responsible (10)
 - Carol's bad behaviour attaining good end? (4)
 - Take drug for healing? Not quite, not exactly (6)
 - Former people found in Europe etc (3,5)
 - Express disapproval about American bishop giving cane (6)
 - Blind never opens in one section of house (6)
 - Letters from lover don't exaggerate (6)
 - Primarily someone working on books? (4)

Sherwood in talks with Spurs

FOOTBALL

By ALAN NIXON AND NICK HARRIS

TIM SHERWOOD, the Blackburn captain, held transfer talks in London yesterday with the Tottenham Hotspur manager, George Graham, and then said he would ideally like to stay with Rovers.

It is understood that Graham offered Sherwood a salary increase to move to the capital, but Sherwood would prefer to stay at Ewood Park if he can negotiate a rise in pay to around £1m per season. The player has already rejected one improved contract offer from his club.

Sherwood, who turns 30 on Tuesday and has three-and-a-half years to run on his current deal, is unhappy with how his club has handled contract negotiations. "I'm very disappointed that we have been unable to agree terms," he said.

"From the start of the negotiations, which I consider

have dragged on for too long, I've come a lot closer to Blackburn's figure than the club have to mine. I have been negotiating a new deal, but I let the manager know I don't want to leave the club."

Graham has said he wants to make "lots of new signings" for Spurs, but whether Sherwood will be one of them will depend on whether Rovers decide they will increase his salary to keep him. The strength of Sherwood's hand in negotiations may be weakened by the fact that Rovers' yesterday completed the £1m signing of Jason McAteer from Liverpool and the newcomer could come in as a direct replacement for the club

captain. Rovers' manager, Brian Kidd, also said yesterday that the club has a ceiling on pay, put in place by the owner, Jack Walker, that cannot be broken.

"We've got a firm pay scale here and we work to that," Kidd said. "It's worked out well so far. When you're spending money it's quite right that Mr Walker asks questions."

Graham has said he wants to ask me my reasons and then when we negotiate the club has its own rules. What pleased me with Jason is that he just wanted to talk football. He wants to play and that said a lot to me."

Matt Jansen and Keith Gillespie also wanted to come here. They could both have earned more money hanging on. In Keith's case he was a free agent in another six months.

"It's a balance. The club have also got to be fair to players as

well. In the dealings I've had with the dealers I've had they have been like that. But the bottom line is whether the players want to come here to play."

Sherwood has been asking for more than Walker's limit, according to club sources, while the player feels the pay limit is not as rigid as has been pronounced. The impasse is likely to be extended, as there is also said to be interested in Sherwood's services from Wimbledon and Aston Villa.

Another player who might be asked to leave soon, according to his agent, is Juninho. Gianni Paladini said he is "90 per cent certain" that a £10m deal will go through some time in the next week.

Manchester United's Alex Ferguson admitted yesterday he will not be able to strengthen his Champions' League squad before Sunday's Uefa

deadline. "It's a limited field that you are in, because so many players are cup-tied. We will not be signing anyone," he said.

Mick Wadsworth has resigned as the manager of Scarborough to take over at the Second Division strugglers Colchester United in succession to Steve Wigall, who quit last week. Ray McHale, previously the assistant manager, and Derek Mountfield take caretaker charge at Scarborough.

The Office of Fair Trading said last night it was investigating alleged moves made by the Premier League to head off a threatened breakaway by its leading clubs. The Oftt will investigate whether illegal threats were made by the League to its clubs - including Arsenal and Manchester, both involved in super league talks in the summer - to stop a breakaway.

Diawara joins Arsenal's French contingent

ARSENAL ARE confident of completing the signing of the Bordeaux striker Kaba Diawara today. Arsène Wenger

has decided to add to his French foreign legion at Highbury amid uncertainty over when Nwankwo Kanu will be given the go-ahead to start his Gunners career.

The Arsenal manager signed Kanu for £1m from Internazionale two weeks ago, but it could take up to three weeks before the Nigerian is granted a work permit, because the Depart-

ment of Employment is insisting that non-EC players meet tougher admission criteria.

Arsenal face the Premiership leaders, Chelsea, on Sunday and then, after a visit to West Ham the following weekend, take on Sheffield United in the fifth round of the FA Cup just four days before meeting Manchester United at Old Trafford.

Diawara, 23, has been training with Arsenal this week and

Bordeaux say that a transfer fee

- thought to be around £2.5m,

even though he has contributed five goals in their progress to second place in the French First Division and the quarter-finals of the Uefa Cup.

However, Diawara had invariably been used as a substitute and the Bordeaux coach, Eric Baup, said: "If he comes back to us he will spend the rest of the season on the bench."

Players' unions are lobbying Fifa to bring in an annual four-week break from football across the globe. The international federation of players' unions is applying pressure amid fears that some footballers are playing too many matches.

Sunderland attracted a crowd of 33,517 to the Stadium of Light for Wednesday's Pontin's Central League match against Liverpool reserves. Fans were admitted free but over £2,000 was raised.

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FRIDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION



Photographer: John Thorne

Disarming and dangerous

She is the authorities' worst nightmare. Eco-warrior Margaret Jones has spent two weeks living in the rafters of a warehouse. At 50, she's no dreadlocked mucky youth – she's a woman of a certain age who doesn't give a damn

BY ANN TRENEGAN

At 7am yesterday, the police came for Dr Margaret Jones. For 14 days she had barricaded herself inside a warehouse in a rural area called Stow Green Common in east London. This all in aid of stopping the last stretch of the Avon Ring Road.

Her supporters call her Swanny's Queen, though this seems a fairer description. After all, Dr Jones is a 50-year-old eco-warrior whose PhD was on California redwoods. She has been interviewed, paid, hooted and taught at university. Now she has given it all up – the car, the flat, the central heating – for a life of direct action. She may be Dr Jones, eco-warrior, but she's not Swanny – she's a mucky youth.

She is, however, a woman of a certain age who simply does not give a damn, and that makes her dangerous.

Perhaps that is why some 20 to 30 men were gathered on the Common yesterday morning. There were half a dozen police officers and PCs, all fully kitted out. The sheriff and his men were there, as well as a full contingent of security men glowing away in their fluorescent vests. "I'm not going to make it easy for them," Dr Jones had warned. To this end she had barricaded herself here in the warehouse rafters and had taken up residence there. "For the last 14 days I've been here, and she didn't even make it once. Her last day is tomorrow."

The moment Dr Jones heard the crowd coming, she ran herade down the outside. His name is Rowland Ove and he is just driving at the Common when he mobile rings: "Hello, it's Margaret. I want to disturb you seriously in the morning." She said, as you do when you are under siege. Half an hour later she was escorted out.

Her fist was raised and she was blowing a whistle. She shouted that the police had been magnificent, real professionals, who managed to get her out much faster than she had thought possible. Then with a shout of "Stop the Avon Ring Road" she was bundled off.

Yesterday morning Rowland was handling the media from a call box outside the police station. He apologised because he had to teach in the afternoon and so wouldn't be available. Rowland's PhD is in medical physics. He says that I can call them the PhD eco-warriors. He has been as dismally helpful. During our first conversation, I said I'd like to talk to Margaret. "Do you have her mobile number?" he asked. Margaret has a mobile. Later I discovered that she had not one but two. They had been smuggled into her inside loaves of bread in her daily food packages.

I ring and she describes the situation. The security firm had erected a metal fence some 20 feet from the warehouse, and this area is patrolled at all times by at least six or seven security men. There was no chance of me getting any closer. I would have to stand outside the fence. Margaret would poke her head out of the roof. Then we would shout at each other. "Do you have a whistle?" she asked. I did not. "You will need a whistle because that's the only way I will know you are there." Right. "And Wellingtons. It's very, very muddy. You must have Wellingtons."

I bought a whistle for £1 of Rowland and, standing outside the fence, ankle deep in mud, blew. Margaret's head poked out. "Do you have the right boots on?" she shouted. I said I was more worried about freezing to death. "Aren't you cold?" I shouted. She wasn't because she had blankets and a sleeping bag and plastic too. Later the photographs showed that she had covered herself in bubble wrap. She claimed to be really rather comfortable. She had books

and writing-paper but was allowed no newspapers. A supporter had brought her a T-shirt yesterday that said "What Traffic Problem?" but she had not been allowed to keep it because it was too political. She was allowed as much food as she wanted, and winched it up in a string bag. She was not bored. She had just finished *The White Hotel* by DM Thomas and was embarking on *Intimacy* by Hanif Kureishi. She had a candle to read by. She was writing a novel but didn't want to talk about it. "We'll see how it turns out first."

She seemed incredibly together given the circumstances. "This is so weird but it is also strangely domestic," she shouted. "Before I built this platform I was on the ground and collected rainwater from the holes in the roof to flush the toilet. I could hear the security men wandering about and buckets banging. I felt like I was in some medieval courtyard. Then I would smell their bacon frying. Yes, it is strange-

ly domestic. At night the security light comes on. So we have a little routine."

She says it is odd being an onlooker from the inside. The security men ignored her and the shouting – completely. *The Independent's* photographer told me that he felt like he were in the middle of a *Play for Today*.

There is something resilient about Dr Jones that comes with the fact of her age and her commitment. Like the women at Greenham Common, she is simply not going to be told what to do. Like the housewives at Brightlingsea, she is going to have her say. In America there is a protest group called Great Old Bravado for Wilderness. Its founder, a lawyer in her fifties, says that there is nothing like an angry old broad to flummox the authorities. Their newsletter is headed by a quote from Dorothy Sayers: "Time and trouble will tame an advanced young woman but an advanced old woman is uncontrollable by any earthly force."

Margaret Jones grew up in Hertfordshire. She says she was always political and was inspired by her headmistress at grammar school, where they did such things as trek 26 miles for charity. She went to Egypt and got married to a fellow lecturer in literature. In 1983 they went to America, where they stayed for nine years, studying and working at various universities.

In 1992 Margaret became a senior lecturer in American literature at the University of the West of England. She published two books, one based on her PhD thesis and another on feminism. She and her husband are now separated. "But we still have a loving relationship. It's just by telephone!" she shouts. She said that he wanted to teach in Egypt and she wanted to do direct action in England. The two are just a bit incompatible.

She gave up her job 18 months ago because she just felt that it was no longer fulfilling to be a part-time radical. She fought the poll tax, trespassed at Stonehenge and led protests against the veal trade. But it wasn't enough. Rowland says that Margaret is a rational and scientific Marxist. I thought this might be the case when she started shouting about praxys. This is the practical side of theory, the action rather than the talk. "This is the idea of doing things that arise from what you think I saw the issues. I saw how the police work and how the courts always protect property. You think about that. You think about what that means. You go and write letters about it. After a while, that is no longer enough."

Her head bobbed. It is unnerving talking just to someone's head. The only thing I can really say in terms of description is that she has a centre parting.

She says she came to this rather strange stadium by accident. She is against the ring road because of the development it will bring, more than the traffic per se. In mid-November she founded a camp a mile or so away from the Common and lived there in deep mud for some time. Then they found out the warehouse was due for demolition and she and her friends decided to make it a squat. They snuck in through the roof and then, as the law dictates, after a few days they put up signs saying it was their home. The authorities were furious. The road has already been hideously delayed, mostly by the Stop the Avon Ring Road (STAR) campaign and the ingenious legal tactics of a man named Andrew Nicholson. Now they also had these squatters to deal with. Then everyone but Margaret went out to get some food and the security closed in. She was trapped.

"The thing I really want to say is that anyone can do this," she shouts. "I really think if people feel strongly about issues they should get out there and do what they can. Direct action, if necessary. It doesn't take much. I want to demystify this."

But, I shout, there is a big difference between believing in something at weekends and giving everything up full-time for the cause. "Yes, I see what you mean. It is a mental leap. I had to learn what was possible. I learned, too. I learned how to run a camp. How to have a balanced diet in the middle of a forest. How to keep your feet dry."

She says that her mother always said that if you want to do something then you should do it properly. Margaret Jones has done this thing properly. She knows the laws inside out. Up until yesterday she had not broken any of them. Yesterday, after her release, she rang me on her mobile which, amazingly, is still working. She was at a friend's home. She said a half dozen people had been waiting for her when she was finally released. She was happy for their support. She says she's been charged with resisting an officer. "I'm going to plead guilty because I am. In fact, I wish everyone else was guilty too."



Security men outside the warehouse in which Dr Jones barricaded herself (top) pretended not to hear the interview shouted across 20 yards

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MUSIC

John Thorne

Disharmony

Sir: Poor Sir Dennis Stevenson ("Modern concert's 'boring' says Blair's arts adviser", 27 January). He "works hard" all day, then cannot find a parking place for his evening concert, then finds modern composers "elitist and arrogant" and finally falls asleep because the concert is too long!

What is he working at "all day" that makes him so tired? (Quite often the musicians who will give him the evening concert will also have been working "all day"). He could perhaps get a taxi instead of "the hassle" of finding a parking place; he could perhaps attend a pre-concert talk where he would meet a composer, who is not necessarily "elitist and arrogant"; by which time, possibly with the help of a coffee or a G and T, he would be wide awake, interested and stimulated into listening actively, on the edge of his seat, to an hour and a half's music at least.

He could then have a nice meal by 9.30pm at the latest and go home. If this is not possible for him why is he advising our Prime Minister on the arts?

BERNARD ROBERTS
Llanbedr, Gwynedd

Sir: Dennis Stevenson talks as if he were the only concert-goer in the civilised world. He should live 70 miles or more from any big city for a year or so on a salary of, say, £20,000. Then he might just be grateful for the choice of concerts (boring and otherwise) he gets every day in London by virtue of his location and his undoubted wealth.

Living around here, one is jolly lucky to hear a performance by a full-size professional symphony orchestra or opera company in a comfortable, well-appointed venue more than a few times a year. To travel to London for a performance is virtually impossible for many people after a full day's work.

Does it not occur to him that many people travel from London suburbs to concerts and that 7pm would be far too early for them? Or that, for many, the price of tickets is high enough to preclude supper after the concert?

I had hoped that a Labour government might have taken some sensible advice from ordinary voters, but it goes on appointing the same kind of people the Tories did - the wealthy and powerful, who move in restricted social circles.

PAUL DAWSON
Ipswich, Suffolk

Sir: Thank you for reporting Sir Dennis Stevenson's timely comments on the contemporary music scene in this country.

Real music does not need explanation. Does Beethoven have to be explained, or Bach or Mozart? Even "programme" music should stand in its own right as a musical argument.

The main problem in your country (I come from America) is the BBC. The only composers they accept are those sold to them by the spin-doctors of the music profession. In the absence of any absolute criteria they choose those composers using the right sort of trendy gimmicks and presenting the right "image". Hence so much work heard on the air is mercifully modern garbage written by people who should never call themselves composers. If music is any good it gets through to the audience on its own terms.

ROGER DE BLANCKE
London NW7

Wealth of learning

Sir: Jane Sutcliffe (letter, 25 January) says she was never afforded the opportunity to attend Oxford. This is strange, as the opportunity is offered to all, without regard to social background or parental wealth. All it requires is ability.

At least, that was the case up until now. From this year, under the system Ms Sutcliffe supports, it is also necessary to find several thousand pounds to pay for the privilege of being educated. People from backgrounds like mine,



Staten Island Ferry No 5: A commuter sleeps on the way home to Staten Island

Edward Webb

whose families are not wealthy, and who have been brought up with a view that debt is best avoided, will now be discriminated against, favouring the wealthy over the able.

This is not the principle upon which most people want to see university education allocated, and it is to the detriment of society. It benefits us all to see the most able pushed to the limits of their ability at institutions like Oxford.

ANTHONY POTTS
London E14

Tarnished Globes

Sir: The *Independent* is to be congratulated on Andrew Gumbel's report on the Golden Globes (26 January). The truth behind the Golden Globes is

potentially as big a scandal as the current Olympic inquest, and when it is finally embraced by the media there are going to be a lot of red faces among those, including the US media, studios and agents, who have chosen to misrepresent to the public exactly what the Hollywood Foreign Press Association and the Golden Globes are all about.

The vast majority of journalists in Los Angeles cover the film and television industries for the media outside the US are not members of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, nor are they welcome to be members. Sadly, many of the artists receiving their awards honestly believe - as do the majority of the global television audience and the American public - that their work is being honoured by all the foreign journalists based in Los Angeles.

The studios know the truth but are happy with the status quo, as the Globes is a cheap marketing tool for films in release and the run-up to the Academy Awards nominations on 9 February. The timing of the Globes is no coincidence and can affect how the 5,000-plus members of the Academy vote on the Oscars and what the public pay to see at their local cinemas in the coming weeks.

Given the money involved with all aspects of the Golden Globes the odds are that most of the Hollywood crowd will stick their heads firmly in the ground and ignore the obvious. It is going to be up to the media outside the US to expose the Golden Globes as the exercise in smoke and mirrors it truly is.

If changes are not made very soon, the Golden Globes could damage the Hollywood myth and even the Academy Awards themselves, both innocent bystanders in this unnecessary deception.

CHRISTOPHER PICKARD
*Editor
"Moving Pictures"
Los Angeles*

Labour witch-hunt

Sir: Years ago, the Labour Party sacked its witchfinders and rid itself of the apparatus of thought control. New Labour now has need of these old instruments, carefully retrieved from the Chamber of Horrors in the basement at

Millbank Tower. The *Independent* Labour Network is to be proscribed, and the first of a series of trials will shortly break out in Leeds ("Labour tries to stamp out anti-Blair network", 26 January).

But the coming purge has been preceded by very much more serious action, in the rigging of the electoral system to impose closed lists in the European elections. Now it will be impossible for the Independent Labour Network to field candidates in the upcoming elections. A new official called the Registrar of Political Parties has informed us that registration is precluded under the terms of the Registration of Political Parties (Prohibited Words and Expressions) Order 1998.

The Independent Labour Party was formed in 1892, to promote candidates who would be independent of the established parties and defend the interests of the emerging Labour movement. It is now illegal for any Independent Labour Party to present such candidates, at the same time that the leader of New

Labour is seeking to annul the Labour Party itself by merging it into a new Lib-Lab alliance.

New Labour seeks to nullify our traditions by coercion of its own people, and legal interdiction of all others who may offer to challenge it.

KEN COATES MEP
*Nottinghamshire North & Chesterfield, Independent Lab
Mansfield, Nottinghamshire*

Race and adoption

Sir: It is not true to say that those of us who advocated same-race adoption placements believed that all that was needed was a black skin, or that we thought "What's love got to do with it?" ("Secret lies and the burning need to discuss adoption", 28 January).

When Lambeth Council became the first local authority to introduce same-race placement we believed that considerable damage was being done to black children by ignoring their racial and cultural identities.

These policies caused a storm.

and there has been a backlash ever since from many white, middle-class people who feel that they should have free access to acquire able-bodied children, black or white.

It is true that some social workers applied what to my mind is a political definition of black, rather than looking at the needs of the individual child. But it has to be said that when placing a child they always take into account the ability of the prospective adopter to provide love, security and stability.

The subtext for much of the debate is the assumption that white rather than black people can best provide those important requirements to black children.

LINDA BELLOS
London SE22

The writer was the leader of Lambeth Council 1986-1998

Denning's justice

Sir: Many advocates will have memories of Lord Denning ("Denning praise", 26 January). My first sight of him was before his appointment to the High Court when he began to sit as Chairman of Quarter Sessions in Sussex.

I had the task of defending in a drink-drive case, before the advent of the breathalyser. The issue was simply whether my client's ability to drive was impaired by drink.

The case hung on conflicts of evidence between the defendant and the police. At a time when many judges regarded it as their duty to support the police, Denning treated the evidence with complete impartiality, and left it wholly to the jury to decide. They acquitted.

I was sufficiently impressed by this to tell a colleague, whose reply was: "Give him time and he will be like the others!"

Lord Denning has had more time than most. He was never like the others. Perhaps his great achievement is that, slowly and painfully others have tried to be like him. Long may he live!

TOM EDIE
Fordingbridge, Hampshire

The politics of food

Sir: I am concerned that because the new food watchdog will be paid for by food retailers and the food industry it will not be independent. It will no doubt pay for research which will assure us that genetically engineered food and artificial additives are wonderfully safe.

C WELLS
Ruislip, Middlesex

Sir: Food producers are only required to itemise on the label those ingredients that make up more than 20 per cent of the product. We aren't really sure what we are eating even if we do take the trouble to scrutinise labels.

Will the new Food Standards Agency have the strength to overcome objections from the powerful foods lobby to ensure all ingredients are listed so that consumers can make an informed choice about the food they eat?

This will be the acid test that the FSA is free from food producer influence and manipulation and that it is putting the consumer first.

NIGEL BEDROCK
London SW16

Sir: As one of Britain's dwindling number of cattle keepers, I have a question for the Chief Medical Officer ("Beef on bone ban must stay, says health chief", 22 January). Why has a zoonotic disease (one that is transferred from animal to man) been diagnosed, when the first principle has not been fulfilled, to identify the disease in the occupationally exposed?

Surely the so-called virulent indestructible BSE pathogen would have been passed to those such as slaughtermen who have worked in an aerosol spray of these tissues for years. What of the knackersmen, the hunt, the abattoirs who worked daily in the dust, not to mention the farmers? All these people are prone to cuts and abrasions, risking direct entry into the bloodstream.

Is it not time that serious consideration was given to the idea that this may not be an infection, but the result of an environmental trigger, such as organophosphates?

JOANNA WHEATLEY
Maidenhead, Berkshire

Safety first

Sir: I couldn't agree with Diana Lampugh (letter, 26 January) more. Being the single mother of three children who also works full time, I allow my children to walk home from school every night. While the media has a job to do reporting incidents which occur rarely, these incidents are blown out of proportion, resulting in parents keeping their children wrapped in a mythical blanket of safety.

Children who are constantly shielded from the harmful side of life lack the ability to detect or sense trouble in its infancy. These skills have to be gently taught and firmly put in perspective.

If more parents, teachers and adults in general would help children to look out for their own safety, not only would there be safety in numbers but, lone, unhappy children would not be so easy to target.

Stop making it easy for the unspeakable to happen by blinding yourselves and your children to the world of reality by taking away their independence, and making the streets unsafe for everyone.

BEVERLEY SMITH
Sheffield

Ministers' pay check

Sir: Surely ministers' pay awards (report, 27 January) should be performance-linked, like teachers' and nurses' pay? Targets should be set, such as percentage of manifesto pledges met and reduction in time waited for politicians to give straight answers to questions. A new regulator, Ofgov, would, of course, make regular inspections and publish its findings.

IMOGEN COOPER
*Pitlochry,
Perthshire,
Northamptonshire*

Humans are not ready for religions of peace and joy

I HARDLY ever turn on a television news programme these days for fear of finding myself listening to another devout Muslim telling me that we have got Islam all wrong. The last one I saw (by accident, on *Newsnight*, only two days ago) encapsulated everything that is normally said by Islamic apologists. He said something roughly like this: "We Muslims are sick and tired of being depicted by the West as all fundamentalists and fanatics. Islam is a religion of peace and joy. You only have to read the Koran to find that out. You will all come to realise it when Islam comes to dominate the world..."

Yes, he really did use the word "dominate". I leave it to others to explain how a religion that seeks to dominate the world is also a religion of peace and joy. But I'm the

first to agree that all religions from time to time have made similar claims. Almost all the faiths I have come across have claimed to be the only true religion, and have also claimed to be a creed of peace and joy. Christianity, in its day, has claimed to be a militant religion, though you only have to read the Bible to find out that Christianity is also a creed of peace and joy...

The truth is some Muslims are apostles of peace and joy, and some are apostles of war, terror and bloody reprisals. The same is true of Christians. You don't have to go to the Yemen to find fundamentalist violence. A trip to Northern Ireland will bring you the same treat, at less expense. Christian fundamentalist brethren are bombing, beating and blowing each other up there on a regular basis. I believe it is called

the "peace process". But because they are so close to us, we don't think of the people in Northern Ireland as the same kind of people as Islamic fundamentalists.



MILES KINGTON

Fundamentalism gives you the intolerance, cruelty, self-righteousness and tunnel vision you need

killed in their car by a Hindu mob, but it's unusual to hear of Hindus attacking Christians. Hindus killing

and maiming friendly neighbourhood Muslims is the usual pattern. Even in Pakistan itself Muslims do not treat each other with quite the peace and joy the Koran recommends, and violence in Pakistan is now a raging problem, while in Algeria devout Muslims murder each other with a gay abandon I would not wish to see turned on anyone else, whether Christians or atheists.

In my more youthful days I used to conclude from all this that religion was to blame that the armies marching under different banners were driven by religion to persecute each other. But I have changed my mind. I no longer believe that religions are wrong. I think that people are wrong. I think that human beings are not yet ready for religion, which is far too good for them. The same thing was always true of

Communism, which would have worked perfectly with perfect people, but was inflicted on ordinary people; people like us, with all our propensity to be nasty, brutish and rather short with each other, to use power for selfish ends and to use belief as a weapon to beat each other over the head with.

Most of the time it is difficult to match people's behaviour with the religion they think they believe in. The only Buddhist country I have known much at first hand, Burma, is governed by a bloodthirsty, thuggish crowd of extortions much given to inflicting pain and torture on their own people in a way that might have made the Buddha wince a bit. Apartheid was enthusiastically backed by the established South African church. The Islamic impact of Taliban on Afghanistan does not bring the words "peace" and "joy" to mind.

Religion is fine. It's just that nobody is good enough for it. That's why they invented fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is for people who can't handle religion properly. Everyone can get to grips with fundamentalism after only a few basic lessons. Whether Islamic or Hindu, Catholic or Protestant, fundamentalism gives you the intolerance, cruelty, self-righteousness and tunnel vision you need.

And, of course, ways to spout the necessary nonsense. Look "fundamentalism" up in the dictionary. It's right there next to the word "fundament", meaning "backside". Fundamentalism is clearly the art of talking through your backside. And there's no species better at it than the human race.

THE INDEPENDENT

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New Labour should avoid snuggling up to the unions again

WHEN THE former trade and industry secretary, Peter Mandelson, addressed the Trades Union Congress last year, he had one important and persuasive message. He told delegates that it was time to clear their minds of the notion that the interests of employers and employees are necessarily in conflict. They had to understand that all the stakeholders in an enterprise stood to gain from its success. He did not phrase it quite like that, but that was the gist – and a spectacular piece of ideological cheek it was. For a Labour cabinet minister to tell the union movement that the principle on which it was founded is bunk was quite something.

But it was the right thing to say, and, whatever the failings that pushed Mr Mandelson from office, his message should be passed on. In that context, the publication yesterday of the Fairness at Work Bill should be seen as being at a tangent to the central issues of the modern workplace. Most of the measures contained in it are reasonable – even “fair” – compromises that represent a rebalancing of the dangerously tilted structures of industrial relations left over from the Thatcher era. Who could argue against restricting the right to dismiss workers “unfairly”? Who could disagree that, if more than 50 per cent of a workforce vote on a reasonable turnout to be represented by a union, they should be entitled to do so?

But we should beware of thinking that these basic safeguards have anything to do with the real issues of competitive advantage and the success of enterprises, which depend on their culture, skills and the ability to innovate. Many of the forward-looking unions and their leaders recognise that they now have a much smaller role than they had in the past, and that their best hope of influence is to support flexibility and risk-taking.

But there are disturbing signs that the Government, for all its New Labour modernisation Muzak, is snuggling comfortably into an unspoken compact. It has given the unions new representation rights and has shut up about the 50 per cent union block vote at Labour conferences – in return for a quiet life on public sector pay, and union votes in Wales for the Prime Minister’s candidate to lead the Welsh Assembly.

This is bad for both sides. If the new Trade and Industry Secretary, Stephen Byers, is famous for one thing, it is telling journalists in a seafood restaurant in Blackpool that Labour should cut its links with the unions. He should say it again, and this time in public. Instead of yesterday’s candyfloss pleasantries about family-friendly policies, it would have been preferable to hear the Mandelson message from Mr Byers. The interests of workers and bosses are not opposed. Mr Byers should say that again, too. If the Government cannot speak the truth to its paymasters, when is winning, when will it?



Food for thought as you devour breakfast

THE EUROPEAN Parliament's vote to ban battery hen farming should be applauded as a small but significant step in the protection of animals from cruelty. But why should it take 10 years to eliminate this unpleasant and unnecessary form of industrialised food production? “To give egg producers time to adapt”, we are told, as if poultry farmers were a primitive form of life that will take millions of years to evolve into a more intelligent species.

When agriculture ministers meet to consider the parliament's recommendation, Nick Brown should argue for a quicker phase-out. This is a simple moral decision; it will cost the consumers of Europe more – but only fractionally more, and certainly not enough to justify a decade's delay.

Generally, this newspaper argues for less state intervention in the heavily subsidised European food market, and for abolishing the Common Agricultural Policy. But this is a classic example of a case where a free market requires state action. Consumers need full information if markets are to work efficiently. Most consumers do not know the conditions in which their eggs are produced, or they are misled by “farm fresh” labels, or just buy the cheapest.

Free markets take no account of the interests of animals. All markets must operate under the constraints of ethical laws; the issue here is where to draw the line.

Nor should eggs be the end of the line. There are many more causes of avoidable animal suffering, and we have not finished with breakfast yet. For all our moral outrage over fox-hunting and seal culls, there seems precious little indignation to spare for the cruelty inflicted on a grand scale on the animals we use for food. It is not just eggs, but also chicken meat, pork and, to a lesser extent, beef and cows' milk. How many rashes of intensively reared bacon would you like with your free-range eggs?

Better by design

FORD IS buying Volvo's car-making business. Bad news for dummies. But some commentators also argue that this is another step on the road to the bland, one-style-fits-all markets “world car”. They're wrong. Ford won't mess with a marque so successful among well, the Volvo-owning classes. Volvos will still come from Sweden; they will be “safe”. Ford will help Volvo to survive by sharing its vast engineering resources. Volvo is a small player, making 400,000 cars a year to Ford's 7 million. It matters little if a Volvo shares a wiper motor or a floorpan with a Mondeo. It can still be distinctive, just as Saabs, owned by General Motors and related to Vauxhalls, are. Volvo already collaborates with Mitsubishi. It has shared engine development with Peugeot and Renault. Globalisation is older than people think, and it is intensifying. But it is not the end of good design. Volvo, like Jaguar before it, has little to fear from Uncle Henry.

Tory Europhiles may be heroic but they are stuck in a terrible hole

IT'S much fun being a Conservative at the moment. Not only has it not been a disaster, but it has been one of the big stories of the year. Now the Tories are the party of most of the media, the party further to the right. Eurosceptics are the ones who are most likely to be changing their tune. The story of Spanish voters turning more eurosceptic is the one that the news media have latched onto, but the story of the Spanish voters turning more eurosceptic is the one that the news media have latched onto.

In the interview, Heseltine implied William Hague was an irrelevance in this debate. Hague was leader of the Opposition, not the Prime Minister. Conveniently this avoids spending too much time attacking your own leader. Instead the Heseltine gaze focused entirely on Tony Blair.

The Prime Minister was displaying “weak leadership” on Europe, Heseltine declared. He and his Tory colleagues were waiting for a signal from him to step up their campaign in favour of joining the euro. He said tantalisingly that, if Blair were to back the euro unequivocally “all sorts of things would happen”. Specifically he called for the referendum before the general election, convinced that an alliance linking Heseltine, Clarke via Ashdown to Blair and the Cabinet would be winnable.

On the surface this all sounds very tempting. Tony Blair has had the pro-European Tories in his sights for several years. Blair's co-architect in the realignment project, Paddy Ashdown, has been quite open about it. “The Tory party will split and Europe will be the catalyst,” he told me soon after the election. A misjudged flirtation took place a year ago, when Blair raised the prospect of co-operation in a speech without giving Heseltine and



STEVE RICHARDS
The present may be bad but the future is looking even worse for pro-European Tories

any advance warning (although Ken Clarke did have a meeting with the Foreign Office minister, Derek Fatchett, shortly afterwards). The moment appears to be drawing nearer now with the former Deputy Prime Minister crying out for Blair to let them all make common cause.

But my reading of the pro-European Tories' strategy is very different to those who predict a profound reshaping of party politics in Britain. The big Tory stars do not want to leave their party, nor do they see any hope of changing it before a referendum. But if a referendum were to be won, they are rightly convinced that the dynamics within the Tory party would change dramatically.

Once the voters had declared in favour of EMU, they could seize their moment to bring the Conservative

party to its senses. In the circumstances of a “Yes” vote, Hague would have to resign or declare that he accepted the verdict of the referendum, removing the barrier that keeps pro-Europeans out of the front line. If Hague were to stand down, no candidate could credibly bid for the leadership by arguing against the verdict of the electorate in a referendum. For the first time in years, the Europhiles would be in the driving seat.

As Heseltine is convinced that an early referendum is winnable, it is hardly surprising he is pressing for one to be held before the election. “Get us out of our misery,” he is pleading to Blair as well as reiterating strongly held beliefs. For a victorious referendum holds out the prospect of a revived Tory party, purged of its extreme scepticism. The pro-European Tories are not interested in becoming fellow navigators on the road to a centralist realignment. They are interested in transforming the Conservatives from within. Winning a referendum would be their means to bring this about.

So Blair should be wary of the potential for political dividends arising from the Heseltine overture. Indeed it is quite possible – for this government can visualise the chessboard moves ahead of mere mortal strategists – that Blair will conclude the overtures should be ignored altogether: if the star Tories are not going to defect, he may not wish to be the unwitting instrument of a revived pro-European Tory party after a referendum. Instead, he may consider it more tactically useful to tease out the tensions within the Tory party for

several more years, aware that only a referendum would resolve them.

What is depressing is that the tactics on all sides will dictate Britain's approach to the single currency. It is nonsensical to suggest, as the Government does, that entry will be recommended when the economic benefits are “clear and unambiguous”. The economic case is a factor but there will never be a clear and unambiguous moment. In economics there never is. In reality entry will occur when the political benefits are clear-cut. The gesture of friendship from Tory Europhiles is not clear or unambiguous enough.

Nearly always in Britain's relationship with Europe, internal politics has mattered more than the country's immediate and long-term interests, whether it was Harold Wilson pretending to be opposed to entering the Common Market or Margaret Thatcher arguing in favour of Britain joining the European Monetary System (as she did when leader of the opposition in the late Seventies, but only to make the Labour government appear economically weak).

Now the most distinguished and charismatic politicians of our age, from Blair to Heseltine, believe Britain should join the single currency, and yet we have no idea when or even if this will arise. One of the reasons for the doubts is that the charismatic politicians come from different parties and have every intention of staying in them after the battle, which temporarily unites them, has been won.

The writer is political editor of the ‘New Statesman’

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“I want to repay Geoffrey Robinson's loan because that's the right thing to do.”
Peter Mandelson,
former Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

“A man can do what he wants, but not what he wants.”
Arthur Schopenhauer,
German philosopher

COLOMBIA EARTHQUAKE APPEAL

Monday's earthquake devastated the Colombian city of Armenia and surrounding towns and villages. Over 1,000 are feared dead and many thousands are homeless. No-one knows how many are trapped beneath the rubble.

Colombian Red Cross-trained volunteers were the first on the scene, searching for survivors and caring for the injured. But with emergency facilities badly damaged, they need your help now to provide food, medical aid, tents and generators.

Please help. Fill in the coupon below or call us with your donation today.

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PANDORA

BBC2'S CONTROVERSIAL fly-on-the-wall documentary series, *Mersey Blues*, continues to raise Pandora's well-plucked eyebrows. The show is supposed to illustrate the difficult job the police have on the front line, but instead it is developing into a version of *The Keystone Cops*. Wednesday night's episode was a real classic. It starred a fat, hard-bitten cop tucking into plates of Chinese food. But the gourmet Detective Inspector, Elmore "Eddy" Davies, is currently residing at Her Majesty's Pleasure for perverting the course of justice.

THE EVIDENCE at Eddy's trial included his tape-recorded boast that his back "injury" would allow him to retire early "on a nice pension - £500 a week in my hand just for sitting on my extremely fat arse". A spokesman for the Merseyside Police told Pandora that the programme had not affected morale in the force: "We haven't had any adverse reaction. In fact, most people think that it shows a group of dedicated, hard-working officers who are very committed to the job they do."

JOHNNY DEPP has developed a weakness for the mind-bending drink absinthe, the 70 per cent proof liquor popular among deep thinkers in 19th-century Paris. Depp ordered two crates of the drink before Christmas and another five this week. He sent some to his newest best friend, Hunter S Thompson. A music PR was later on the phone to Thompson, as he proceeded to drink the green liquid while describing its exact effects. Those responsible for bringing the drink back into circulation are the founders of *The Idler* magazine, who are putting together advertising slogans such as "Tonight we're gonna party like it's 1899".



THE LATEST offering from the free-market think-tank the Social Market Foundation might at first sight set pulses racing. However, "The rise and fall of the Swedish model" by Mauricio Rojas promises more than it is. The racy tome documents the fortunes of Sweden's version of the

Third Way rather than a history of Scandinavian glamour.

FURTHER EVIDENCE of the music world's disenchantment with Cool Britannia was to be found at the NME Premier Awards. Pandora was among the audience at the Virgin Haymarket, to see the music paper's documentary. It included a criticism of the Government on tuition fees and welfare reform. The thrusting audience was told that Tony Blair was "invited to comment on criticism of government policy but declined to take part". Not so, Downing Street told Pandora. "If we had been asked to comment on these issues we would have done." But NME's editor, Steve Sutherland, was adamant that an honest approach had been made, telling Pandora: "We did all that we could to get the Prime Minister on."

A FRESH look at one Liberal Democrat internal party contest held last year gives an interesting slant to the race to succeed Paddy Ashdown. Results for the 1998 Federal Executive, an important steering group for the party, show the Taunton MP, Jackie Ballard, topping the poll over 33 other candidates. As Pandora has already pointed out, Ballard is a good bet to enter the race, but what of front-runner Charles Kennedy? Although succeeding in getting elected to the executive body, which runs elections on an STV basis, Kennedy comes in behind Old Liberal stalwart Tony Greaves. A fine achievement for Greaves, considering that his election literature was withdrawn by the executive's adjudicators.

CANDY ATHERTON, Labour MP for Falmouth and Cranborne, has eschewed the boring business of flat-sharing in favour of a 50ft narrowboat, to be moored as close as possible to the House of Commons without upsetting the view from the Speaker's apartments. The boat, currently jammed between two French naval vessels close to Pandora at Canary Wharf, will be named *The Honourable Lady*.

Contact Pandora at: pandora@independent.co.uk

Is child abuse ever a laughing matter?



PHILIP HENSHER
Jokes about horrible subjects are only distasteful if the result doesn't work as comedy

WHY DO you wrap hamsters in sellotape? How do they know Lord Mountbatten had dandruff? Paedophilia, eh? Pretty big word - for an eight-year-old. What does gay stand for? A Jew, a hunchback and a lesbian go into a taxidermist's...

You would think that no one would bother getting worked up about jokes in bad taste. They are probably as ancient as the world, and whether you don't mind listening to them or think them boringly puerile, it must be admitted that they serve some kind of deep psychic need. Maybe to exercise the demons, maybe to deal with some terrible facts on a human scale; in any case, it's probably best to ignore them. They're not going to go away.

It was surprising to hear that a humorous column in the medical press has created an outcry. If bad taste jokes are common in the world at large, they are more or less ubiquitous among doctors, who need to be robust about the macabre, and often do it by joking about the patient whose leprosy finger dropped into the tea, or the one who pushed a milk bottle up his bottom ("You see, doctor, I slipped

on the doorstep in my dressing gown..."). It is absurd to suggest that the quality of professional care is diminished by the callous talk in the pub after work; it would be nearer the mark to think that black humour makes it easier to do the job.

All the same, there are limits, and the column in the magazine *Hospital Doctor* may have discovered one. Supposedly the diary of a fictitious

registrar, Dave Grout, it has caused a furore by going into the fraught area of child abuse. In one of Grout's adventures he gatecrashed a dinner party and gave an 11-year-old girl - "a decent bit of tatty, obviously fancies my pants off" - vodka and marijuana, failing to seduce her only because she started vomiting.

The column was quickly axed, and a line of people eagerly began giving their condemnations to the newspapers. Jenny Eclair gave a useful list of subjects she would never joke about, and expected no one else to joke about either - "cot death, drink driving, child abuse, AIDS... dead babies, poorly babies, meningitis - anything like that." Her list seems unnecessarily austere, and everyone knows that AIDS, in particular, breeds a sort of gallows humour which can hardly be condemned.

The conventional thing to say here is that it's all right to joke about your own condition - for blind people to talk about Guide Dogs for the Blind, or for someone who is HIV positive to reminisce about that slimming biscuit in the 1970s called Ayds - but not for anyone else.

There are certainly far more extreme comedians around than Manning.

Howard Jacobson has written about a routine by Roy "Cimby" Brown of eye-popping tastelessness, including the appalling remark that "Someone told me to take a box of tissues when I went to see *Schindler's List*. *Schindler's List*? I couldn't find anything to wank over in *Schindler's List*".

The awful fact is that Brown, a much more technically adept comedian than Manning, is genuinely extremely funny. Perhaps it's because he takes more careful aim than Manning, making a joke here, not about the Holocaust, but about the multi-million dollar pictures of Hollywood. But I wouldn't bet on it; nor would I bet that he would be incapable of making his audience laugh with jokes even about "dead babies, poorly babies, meningitis".

The terrible fact is that, although we might hope always to turn away from jokes about child abuse, there is always the danger that, in the middle of saying "I just don't think that is at all amusing, to tell you the truth..." we may find ourselves at the hideous giggling mercy of what is, quite suddenly, a terribly funny joke.

After 350 years, we should sort out the Lords - again



BILLY BRAGG
It's time to do away with the notion of an 'Upper House' and all its patriarchal baggage

THREE HUNDRED and fifty years ago this week on 30 January 1649, Charles I was executed outside the Banqueting House in Whitehall. There was little jubilation among those present, rather a feeling that such unpleasantness could have been avoided if the King had been less intransigent when confronted with a genuinely reformist parliament. Six weeks later the House of Lords was abolished by a majority in the Commons.

Rather than resolving the problem of who ran the country, the events of 1649 sparked a furious debate at all levels as to how the new constitution should operate. From the Diggers, who took Cromwell's idea of a "commonwealth" at face value, to the Lords themselves, who argued that executing the King had somehow gone against the natural God-given order of things, the English struggled for eight years with the hitherto uncharted practicalities of how to run a society along democratic lines. Various compromises between the old and the new were tried but, once Cromwell had died, a vacuum of power appeared and in 1660 the monarchy returned with the House of Lords in tow.

Abolition, done in haste, proved to be a mistake. Charles II celebrated his restoration in the same Banqueting Hall from which his father had emerged to be executed, but the age of absolutism was over. The upheavals of the 1640s had put England firmly on the road to government by parliament.

This month in London, a group of land reformers gathered under the banner "Diggers 350" to discuss and celebrate the events of 1649, particularly the cultivation of waste land by the Digger community on St George's Hill in Weybridge. One of the radical aspirations of the English Revolution was the removal of

the "Norman yoke", based upon the notion that, before 1066, the Anglo-Saxons had lived as free citizens, governing themselves. The Norman Conquest deprived them of this liberty and established the alien tyranny of feudalism.

This belief is not borne out by history. Just as the British invented baseball, where the Americans were clever enough to codify it, so a loose feudalism had been practised in England before the Normans came in and enshrined the system of law. Before the Conquest the country was administered by *eldormen*, each of whom was in charge of a shire. After the Battle of Hastings these local lords were replaced by the friends of William I.

However, the notion that Anglo-Saxon institutions had been essentially democratic persisted. To the Diggers, the survival of Norman French in the legislative language of England gave an edge to their demands; with the presence in the House of Lords of the remnants of King William's feudal aristocracy, ranting against the "Norman Yoke" had contemporary resonance.

Even the barons themselves were not above evoking a pre-Norman utopia. At Runnymede in 1215, they called on King John to re-establish the rights of free men as they had been in the time of Edward the Confessor. By pointing to this tradition, the radicals of the 1640s were able to shake off the accusation that they were dangerous innovators and insist that they merely desired to restore ancient rights.

Thus, all the way back to the Magna Carta, there is a continuity of dissent and reform in this country that continues to frame the aspirations of modern campaigners. Charter 88 takes its name in part from the Chartist movement of the mid 19th century and this year the Common Sense Club will be mounting a campaign to have a statue of Tom Paine erected in London.

While their Lordships encourage deference to custom and practice, it is this rival tradition of initiation that has brought progressive change to our society.

Personally, I am opposed to the idea of a house of nominees and trust that the Royal Commission will equip whoever replaces the hereditary with a democratic mandate. However, I feel the time has come to do away with the notion of an "Upper House" and all the patriarchal baggage that goes along with it. Once we remove the titled from their benches, "House of Lords" loses all its meaning. Let's not replace them with a "House of Peers". Why are we so psychologically attached to the notion of an "upper" house, an august body separated from the people by appearing to be "above" the House of Commons?

For more than a century now, sovereign power has rested solely with the Commons, and the idea of a senior chamber brings with it stale images of superannuated politicians snoozing their way through debates.

I am not, however, suggesting that we should abandon the bi-cameral system of government, merely that reform can be achieved without having to create a democratic replica of the present arrangements. Would it not be possible to set the Law Lords up in a supreme court, send the bishops home to their parishes and give the important job of revising government legislation to the proposed regional assemblies in England and the national parliaments in Scotland and Wales? By giving each region its own senate, with a clearly defined role of revising parliamentary legislation, we could avoid the rivalry that is bound to arise if two democratically elected national assemblies meet simultaneously in the capital.

The fifty senators sitting in each region would be linked by information technology for their daily deliberations, constituting a debating "chamber" of around 400 members (considerably fewer than the present House of Lords). Such a plan would decentralise the legislative process and offer the benefits of devolution to the English shires. With elections by proportional representation in the middle of parliamentary terms, this could invigorate local political debate. It would give the marginalised regions a voice alongside the metropolitan élite who currently make up so much of our political class. Some of our enlightened noblemen might even care to put themselves before the electorate.

It would be a fine irony if the powers of the House of Lords, whose members refused to defend the democratic rights of local government in the 1980s, should be superseded by elected local officials, men and women who would be the 21st-century equivalent of the *eldormen*, those local representatives of our Anglo-Saxon kings.



The abolition of the Lords followed swiftly on Charles I's death

Resist the culture of death



PODIUM

JOHN PAUL II

Taken from a speech given by the Pope at Lambert Airport, St Louis during his visit to the US

AS YOU know, I have been in Mexico, to celebrate the conclusion of the Special Assembly for America of the Synod of Bishops. The purpose of that meeting was to prepare the Church to enter the new millennium and to encourage a new sense of solidarity among the peoples of the continent. Now I am happy to bring this message to mid-America, on the banks of the Mississippi, in this historic city of St Louis, the gateway to the West.

As pastor of the universal Church, I am particularly happy to greet the Catholic community of the Archdiocese of St Louis, with its rich spiritual heritage and its dynamic traditions of service to those in need. I am looking forward to being with the priests, deacons, religious and laity of this local church, which has exercised such influence on the history of the Midwest.

Although St Louis is the only place I am able to visit at this time, I feel close to all the Catholics of the United States. I express my friendship and esteem for my fellow Christians, for the Jewish community in America, for our Muslim brothers and sisters. I express my cordial respect for people of all religions and for every person of good will.

As history is retold, the name of St Louis will be for ever linked to the first transatlantic flight, and to the immense human endeavour and daring behind the name *The Spirit of St Louis*.

You are preparing for the bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase, made in 1804 by president Thomas Jefferson. That anniversary presents a challenge of religious and civic renewal to the entire community. It will be the opportunity to reassess "The Spirit of St Louis" and to reaffirm the genuine truths and values of the American experience.

There are times of trial, tests of national character, in the history of every country.

America has not been immune to them. One such time of trial is closely connected with St Louis. Here, the famous Dred Scott case was heard. And in that case the Supreme Court of the United States subsequently declared an entire class of human beings - people of African descent - outside the boundaries of the national

considered "useless" - to be outside the boundaries of legal protection. Because of the seriousness of the issues involved, and because of America's great impact on the world as a whole, the resolution of this new time of testing will have profound consequences for the century whose threshold we are about to cross.

My fervent prayer is that, through the grace of God at work in the lives of Americans of every race, ethnic group, economic condition and creed, America will resist the culture of death and choose to stand steadfastly on the side of life.

To choose life - as I wrote in this year's message for the World Day of Peace - involves rejecting every form of violence: the violence of poverty and hunger, which oppresses so many human beings; the violence of armed conflict, which does not resolve but only increases divisions and tensions; the violence of particularly abhorrent weapons such as anti-personnel mines; the violence of drug trafficking; the violence of racism; and the violence of mindless damage to the environment.

Only a higher moral vision

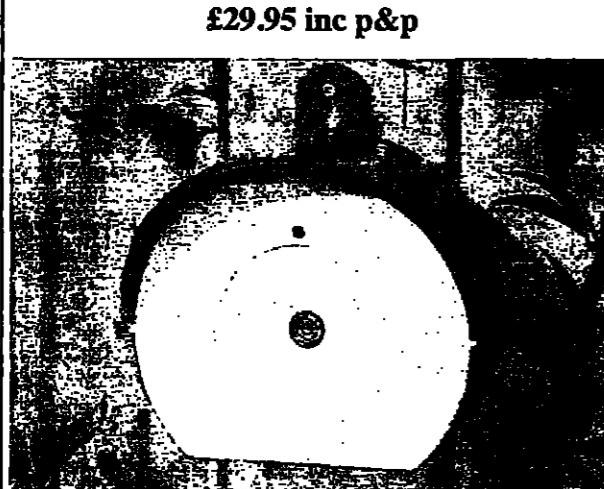
can motivate the choice for life. And the values underlying that vision will greatly depend on whether the nation continues to honour and revere the family as the basic unit of society; the family - teacher of love, service, understanding and forgiveness; the family - open and generous to the needs of others; the family - the great well-spring of human happiness.

Mr President, dear friends: I am pleased to have another opportunity to thank the American people for the countless works of human goodness and solidarity which, from the beginning, have been such a part of the history of your country. At the same time I know that you will hear my plea to open wide your hearts to the ever increasing plight and urgent needs of our less fortunate brothers and sisters throughout the world.

This, too - the spirit of compassion, concern and generosity - must be part of "The Spirit of St Louis". Even more, it must be the renewed spirit of this "one nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all". God bless you all. God bless America.

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g matter?

A new line in hypocrisy



DEBORAH ORR
Labour's attitude to transport policy is a classic example of the new cocaine socialism

IT WAS good to see old Jarvis Cocker stick his head above the parapet again this week, choosing to expand on his theory of cocaine socialism at the NME Premier Awards on Tuesday night. First formulated in a track of the same name for his latest album, *This Is Hardcore*, his argument is that champagne socialism has been superseded under New Labour by something far more pernicious. Cocaine socialism, then, is the politics of selfishness, and it is thus named after the overwhelming do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do self-absorption that is one of the most noticeable behavioural characteristics of someone on a cocaine high.

Jarvis, of course, knows where of he speaks, and has himself displayed some of the attitudes of the cocaine socialist – not least in the replacement of Sarah, his girlfriend through the bad times before fame came along, with the teenage actor and model Chloe Sevigny. In fact, his behaviour is entirely consistent with his new ideology. Bearing in mind the massive majority of the New Labour Government, it is to be assumed that we're all cocaine socialists now.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in New Labour attitudes to transport policy, among both the officials and the voters. Chief offender among the administrators is Lord de Ramsey. His position as chairman of the Environmental Agency means that he is Britain's number one pollution watchdog, and might therefore be expected to spearhead the Government's stated policy of getting people out of their private cars and on to public transport.

Titters all round then, when the papers reported this week that, while His Lordship does indeed set an example by commuting on the train from his Cambridgeshire estate to London's King's Cross station, this example is somewhat sullied by the fact that his chauffeur sets off from his home in Reading in a Ford Scorpio diesel so that he can pick his master up from the station and drive him on a 20-minute trip through rush-hour traffic to his office in Millbank Tower.

The Tory-appointed peer refused to be interviewed, but a spokesman declared: "Lord de Ramsey is per-



A monument to car culture: Carhenge, built by American farmer Jim Reinders in Nebraska, duplicates Stonehenge, except that it's made entirely from cars AP

factly entitled to use a car. It stretches credulity to suggest he should be seen standing at a bus stop." He may have been appointed by his chum John Major, but since we're all expected to take this enormous line he's offered us, we can mark Lord de Ramsey down as an instinctive cocaine socialist all the same.

More amusing still is David Begg, the messianic anti-car campaigner, Edinburgh City councillor and sometime chief adviser to John Prescott. One of the main architects of the recent White Paper that outlined the Government's strategy for getting people on to public transport, Begg is a hate figure in Edinburgh because of his hard-line policies which are entirely geared towards getting cars out of the city altogether.

So apocalyptic is his future vision of the car that he makes farmer Jim, the farmer in Ohio who has dedicated his recent years to building and maintaining "Car Henge", an exact replica of Stonehenge but built using the cars he wishes would disappear off the face of the planet, seem perfectly normal.

Begg appeared on Scottish tele-

vision earlier this week warning of a "traffic time bomb" and declaring: "I don't want to ban cars, but if we are not successful in reducing car use, then that is one of the Draconian measures which we will have no choice but to implement."

Few people remained untouched by irritation when the stunningly self-righteous Begg threw away his own car keys last year in a publicity stunt to promote a pollution-free Edinburgh. Since then, he's claimed that he has never, ever used a car. This was proved to be just another big fat lie when it was revealed that Begg had run up a £500 taxi bill at the council's expense.

We'd all naturally be much more keen to give up our cars if free taxis became available to us, but it's hard to see how this might bring down pollution, particularly when taxis, just like Lord de Ramsey's Scorpio, run on the diesel fuel that's so much more damaging to the environment than unleaded petrol.

Meanwhile, John Prescott himself snorts suspiciously when reminded that it may be time for him to give up his Jaguar, even if he personally launched last summer's integrated transport policy and, more

recently, the Alternative Traffic in Towns initiative, which aims to ban all but low-emission electric- and gas-driven vans, cars and buses from city centres. Even the God of Green Living, Jonathon Porritt, who wants private cars banned entirely from motorways, admits that while he doesn't own a car himself, he does borrow his wife's little run-around to do the shopping.

But when it comes to hypocrisy and bloody-mindedness on the roads, we, the public, are the worst offenders. Few people could have remained entirely unrepelled by the launch this week of the world's first hermetically sealed baby buggy. It has a pollution-proof passenger capsule, plus a filter adapted from those used in the masks worn by firemen. Its battery-driven fan sucks air through the filter and pumps 160 litres of cleaned air a minute into the baby's plastic cocoon.

Despite its £500 price tag, the Baby+Air pushchair is rolling off its Warwickshire production line at a rate of 1,000 a month, and is already in stock at Mothercare. Its inventor, Stephen Kuester, believes he's on to a winner, for parents are becoming increasingly anxious about

their children's asthma. The figures are certainly sobering. The number of children with asthma has doubled in a decade. More than a fifth of under-fives were diagnosed with it last year, while one in seven children under 15 is now asthmatic. And it's not only children who are at risk.

The Chief Medical Officer, Sir Kenneth Calman, estimates that between 12,000 and 24,000 people may be dying each year from pollution in British cities. The Government's theoretically correct solution is to crack down still further on the private motorists who contribute most to air pollution, with workplace parking fees, tolls and congestion charges planned across the country and spot fines for drivers whose exhaust fumes fail an emissions test.

But Kuester's pushchair remains more likely to protect a few petted and privileged children from asthma than any of these measures. In a survey published yesterday, the car services company Lex found that 83 per cent of drivers believed that a car was completely essential to their lifestyle. More worryingly, 68 per cent of drivers were certain that even if the cost of public transport were slashed by

half, they would continue to drive to work. More than 50 per cent said that tolls, fees and charges would be unlikely to stop them from using their vehicles.

It appears that the advance of the car is unstoppable, and while the estimate that traffic in Britain will increase by a third before 2010 seems hard to countenance, the public's attachment to private transport also seems unshakeable.

Yet it is simply physically impossible for more cars to be accommodated in cities. There's no room on the roads, there's no room to park and there's precious little air to breathe. A total ban on private cars in city centres, however draconian that may sound, has to be the inevitable consequence of our love-affair with the car.

Zero tolerance is more likely to be successful in getting rid of the cocaine socialists on our roads than it can ever be when called upon to rid us of cocaine. Which means that we'll have no one to blame but ourselves when the likes of David Begg finally get their way. There's only one way of stopping him. Jarvis Cocker must enact his transport policies as Mayor of London.

RIGHT OF REPLY

FELICITY COLLIER



The director of the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering replies to an article by Yasmin Alibhai-Brown

YASMIN POWERFULLY attacks the adoption "fundamentalists" but I am deeply depressed at hearing the same old myths about children in care. There are flaws in the system, and the future of those children who do not have a settled family life is bleak – but really, "children languishing in state institutions"?

Almost all children in care are living with genuine carers who open their homes and hearts to children whose lives are temporarily in turmoil but who with support and hard work will return home.

As for "infants in institutions"? Just find me one. The number will be minute; 73 per cent of all children in care return home within a year, most within six weeks. The problems that led to their admission will be family crises – not intractable problems but ones related to poverty and disadvantage which can be tackled with financial and social work support.

There is a statistically small but important group of small children for whom a return to their birth family is unrealistic and often unsafe. There is no evidence that these are the children of teenage mothers – indeed the leap to this conclusion is based on anecdote and prejudice. There are mothers unable to cope but there are also families who abuse and neglect their children. Social workers must be able to identify these children in order to allow them the opportunity of a secure family.

Adoption has changed beyond recognition – who would have thought 30 years ago that we would find adoptive parents for disabled children and groups of siblings?

I would welcome debate about the proper place for adoption. Critical to the debate must be the interests of the children, and not the emphasis on "good parents who cannot get any babies to adopt".

A vital tale of good and evil

FRIDAY BOOK

THE GOOD LISTENER:
HELEN BAMBER, A LIFE AGAINST CRUELTY

BY NEIL BELTON, WEIDENFELD & NICOLSON, £18.99



WE ASK only why bad things happen, not why good ones do. Volumes are written about the causes of war, disease and despair; no one asks about the causes of peace, health and happiness. Yet surely these are much more elusive.

The same is true of moral good and evil. In times of disaster, people are not prepared for the redness in tooth and jaw of human nature. Some of the greatest books of our century, such as those by Primo Levi, are anguished meditations on how its evils were possibly. Brave writers such as Gitta Sereny take up that bafflement, and ask how an ordinary man like Franz Stangl, or a child like Mary Bell, could have committed such horrifying crimes.

Yet extreme good is as rare as extreme evil, although this, too, is rarely noticed. I cannot think of another book that asks the obverse of the Sereny question. What makes someone want to

do extreme good? That is what Neil Belton's book does, which makes it most unusual and most valuable.

The Good Listener not only asks the question but also answers it, very convincingly, about Helen Bamber. She was born in London in 1925. Her paternal grandparents, who may have been illegal immigrants, had come to England 30 years before, after wanderings from Poland to America and back. Her father, Louis, recalled pogroms in an east European childhood, which may or may not have been real.

Her mother, a conventional, fun-loving woman, was driven to extremes of frivility by his depression. Louis's parents and brothers never mentioned the past, but suffered from it equally. Helen was a child without a childhood: peacemaker, negotiator, listener. And so she would remain. She took on her father's burden – but was determined not to let it crush her. He wanted to change everything, could change nothing, and succumbed to despair. She resolved "to work with some, instead of despairing about them all".

In 1945 she went to Belsen with the Jewish Relief Fund. For several years she worked with children from the camps – the "Boys" of Martin Gilbert's recent book, about whom we get a grimmer but more touching picture here. She married and had two sons.

She became involved with a campaigner against cruelty in medicine, Maurice Papworth – the greatest influence on her after her father. Soon after its founding in 1961, she joined Amnesty International. In the Seventies,

however it happened, Louis was infected with a fearfulness, a sense of menace that destroyed his life and nearly destroyed his daughter's.

From the moment that he read Mein Kampf, he believed every word of Hitler's threats to the Jews. He became obsessed with the horrors of war and extermination, even before they happened. He was a visionary overwhelmed by his vision. He wrote about it endlessly, but privately; and talked about it endlessly to his only child. From the time she was nine or ten, Helen was afraid of a Nazi invasion.

Her mother, a conventional, fun-loving woman, was driven to extremes of frivility by his depression. Louis's parents and brothers never mentioned the past, but suffered from it equally. Helen was a child without a childhood: peacemaker, negotiator, listener. And so she would remain. She took on her father's burden – but was determined not to let it crush her. He wanted to change everything, could change nothing, and succumbed to despair. She resolved "to work with some, instead of despairing about them all".

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She became involved with a campaigner against cruelty in medicine, Maurice Papworth – the greatest influence on her after her father. Soon

FRIDAY POEM

WINTER JASMINE
BY MICHAEL HAMBURGER

For a cold blossoming, less than cold praise:
Under veiled skies, in greyness
Eyes too are veiled,
And invisible almost against
A wall too much haze cast adrift
Nor weighty with fragrance as
Of its white kin
Or winter-white viburnum, honeysuckle,
To an absence of bees
It lavishly opens, displays
All those mock-suns, in vain;
Shines, but for senses dormant
Till aconite
With surprise caps its yellow
That fades now, dies.

Our poems this week come from Michael Hamburger's *'Collected Poems 1941-1994'* (Anvil Press, £12.95)

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Jerzy Turowicz

JERZY TUROWICZ was for half a century Poland's leading Catholic layman. As veteran chief editor of the respected Krakow weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny* ("Universal Weekly"), he was a powerful figure in Poland's post-war cultural and religious life during the long years of Communist rule. Although a close friend of Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, who became Pope John Paul II, his relations with Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński were not always so smooth.

In the post-Communist period he was a critic of some aspects of Polish society and was wary of attempts in the more backward-looking quarters of the Church to re-establish its control over society. He accused the Catholic bishops of wanting to "replace Marxist ideology with Christianity". Turowicz even grew exasperated at his old friend Pope John Paul, who had him thrown off the board of the John Paul II Foundation after Turowicz had run a debate in the paper about whether there should be some exceptions to the Church's ban on abortion.

Turowicz was born in Krakow (then in the Austro-Hungarian empire) in 1912 and studied philosophy at the city's Jagiellonian University, graduating in 1933. He was always passionately devoted to journalism, publishing his first article when he was 18. He became chief editor of the Krakow paper *Głos Narodu* in 1939.

In March 1945 Cardinal Adam Sapieha founded *Tygodnik Powstępu* and Turowicz became chief editor; a post he was to hold for 50 years. The one interruption to his long reign was in the 1950s. Turowicz and his fellow editor Stanisław Stoma refused to publish an obituary of Stalin in 1953. The Communist authorities used the long-desired opportunity to take the paper away from Turowicz and his suspect team and hand it to the loyal Pax organisation, led by the Fascist-turned-Communist Erazm Piasiecki.

In 1956 though, with Gomułka's reforms, there was a slight easing of political control. Leading *Znak* members - who were Socialists but never Marxists - declared their support for the reforms, which they believed would bring Poland closer to their brand of socialism. Gomułka summoned the group to Warsaw and the paper was restored to Turowicz. The first new issue appeared on Christmas Day 1956. Turowicz also became a leading member of the newly established Catholic Intelligentsia Clubs.

Before 1953 the paper worked in what Turowicz described as "a closed vase", but after 1956 was able to reforge links with the Church in

the rest of the world, sending journalists abroad, participating in international events and receiving foreign papers. Turowicz once set out the three main principles behind the paper: "an explanation of the demands of the Gospel in the social sphere", "an ecclesiology which recognises the links that exist between the Church and the world", and "a universalism which turns its back on all provincialism or narrow nationalism".

Tygodnik Powszechny's survival as an independent Catholic paper in Communist Eastern Europe was unique, and was partly due to Turowicz's delicate skills - and partly to the power of the church hierarchy who, with certain qualification, backed the paper. But Turowicz - who never shied away from sensitive topics - had to cope with constant obstruction from the authorities. The chief problem was getting enough newsprint. After Turowicz's restoration in 1956, circulation rose to 50,000, but would have been far higher had the authorities not restricted the number of copies printed.

There were also constant problems with the censors. From the 1970s on Turowicz refused to publish articles that had been cut. After the declaration of martial law in 1981 blank spaces, filled only with the decree number that authorised government censorship of newspapers, became a common sight. As far back as 1964, Turowicz had signed the famous "Letter of the 34" to Premier Józef Cyrankiewicz protesting against censorship and limited allocations of paper.

Turowicz's position brought him in close touch with Wojtyla, who returned to Krakow full-time as assistant bishop in 1958 and became archbishop in 1964. The future pope would often drop by at Turowicz's home. The two had long been friends, and Turowicz published a



Turowicz was sacked for refusing to publish an obituary of Stalin

Gonzalo Torrente Ballester

THE CONTEMPORARY literatures of Spain and Portugal are the liveliest, richest and most inventive in Europe, with their large, enthusiastic readerships and the generous attention of the daily and weekly press unequalled anywhere in a world hamstrung by cultural fashions, by television and Internet trivialities and pop-lyric doodlings.

In Spain, among the public's regular treats are those provided by the multi-page weekly arts section "Bella" in *El País*, the literary journal *Líbero* and the daily serious coverage of books and writers. This is because the Spaniards have a true passion for literature, and take pride in their writers - they love and revere them with an emotional fervour unimaginable in the British literary cliques.

Gonzalo Torrente Ballester, adoringly known as "El Señor de las Letras" and a great icon of Spanish literature, frequently appeared in the dailies and weeklies both as a spirited and original contributor and as the well-researched subject of essays, reviews and extended interviews. His obituaries, like those for the poet and artist Joan Brossa who died last month, covered several pages in all the papers, and will be followed by an equally impressive spread of post-funeral memories, assessments and eulogies.

Yet Torrente Ballester was hardly known outside Spain. As far as I know, there are no English translations of his works, and it was only in the last 10 years that he began to be translated into French by the energetic young Provencal publishing house Actes Sud, to the acclamation of critics and readers.

In a prologue to his 1977-82 collected works, he recalls that his first novel, *José María*, appeared in 1943, one year after another Galician writer, Camilo José Cela, published his first work, the ever popular *Familia de Pascual Duarte*, and one year before Carmen Laforet's nihilistic *Nada*. The fourth novelist of this remarkable literary generation, Miguel Delibes, had an immediate success in 1947 with his *La sombra del cielo es larga* ("The Lengthening Shadow of the Cypress").

Torrente Ballester's novel did not enjoy the immense triumphs of those three brilliant contemporaries. There were two main reasons why such a fine début should have been totally ignored. It was a piece of fantastical semi-autobiography full of quirky language and esoteric references that found no place in the current literary tradition of earthy realism, and it was rejected even by the small but perceptive public of disabused intellectuals and critics.

Fruit of America, Torrente Ballester produced another resplendent comedy, about the lives of campus professors and their infatuations for their two students, *La isla de los jardines cortados* ("The Island



"El Señor de las Letras"

of Cut Hyacinths"), which came out in 1980. This author who called himself a "false witness" and "a master of misleading trials" tells of an elderly professor who has written a book proving that Napoleon never existed, that he was just a myth dreamed up by Nelson, Metternich and Chateaubriand to spare them the trouble of fighting the French Republic.

His wacky theory is exposed by a younger professor in love with a student, Ariadna, who is fruitlessly pursued by the older professor. It is a weirdly ironical yet fantastic farce. In his preface, the author writes: "I've never felt within me the soul of a reformer, and I long ago stopped being a utopian. What few beliefs I have left I observe with an ironic eye, or at least I try to."

Gonzalo Torrente Ballester inherited from his sea-going father and the environment of El Ferrol a taste for maritime adventures, naval history, islands, maps, dockyards, naval strategy found in most of his works. Such influences are reminiscent of the geographical fantasies of Julian Gracq, whose first novel, *Le Château d'Argol* (1938), he must have read as a student in Paris, and whose 1951 masterpiece *Le Rêve des Syrtes* would surely have appealed to him. The grotesque folk tales of Galicia, a region rich in wonderful legends, are also present, mingled with metaphysical considerations, erudite legal procedures and wordplay.

Torrente Ballester wrote: "There is within me an inexplicable force that makes me invent whole worlds and populations." We saw him doing just that on all the Spanish (and particularly Galician) television channels, as he laboured over an old-fashioned typewriter in Salamanca - real writers never use word processors!

JAMES KIRKUP
Gonzalo Torrente Ballester, writer:
born El Ferrol del Caudillo, Spain
13 June 1910; twice married (11
children); died Salamanca 27
January 1999.

Buzz Kulik



Kulik, left, directing Jim Brown in *Riot* (1969). The film - criticised for its violence - was made in the Arizona State Penitentiary

BUZZ KULIK was one of the most successful directors in television - he made Brian's Song, considered one of the best television movies ever - but fared less well on the big screen, perhaps because his work was proficient rather than distinctive. With the demise of the studio system in the Sixties, television became the haven for the sort of journeymen craftsmen who were once the backbone of the industry, and though Kulik made some good films (*The Warning Shot*, *Riot*) he rarely imposed a notable style or personality on his work. His television work, though, both on series episodes and TV movies, won considerable acclaim. Brian's Song winning the Emmy award as the outstanding single programme of 1971 plus an award for Kulik from the Directors' Guild of America.

Born Seymour Kulik in Kearny, New Jersey, in 1922, he served in the army during the Second World War, then worked in the mailroom of the large advertising agency J. Walter Thompson. Spotting a notice requesting directors for the young medium of television, he applied and began to direct advertisements. In 1947 he was directing the cameras filming games at Yankee Stadium, then moved to drama, directing live episodes of such television anthology series as *Luz Video Theatre* and *Playhouse 90*.

Moving to CBS in 1956, he directed episodes of the acclaimed series *You Are There*, and later worked on such shows as *Perry Mason*, *The Defenders* and *Twilight Zone*. Kulik received his first Emmy nomination with an episode of *Dr Kildare* called *Shifting Image*, and a second in 1975 for the movie *Babe*, starring Susan Clark as Babe Didrikson, the Olympic track and field medalist who turned professional golfer. In 1970 he won the Emmy for his direction of *A Storm in Summer*, starring Peter Ustinov.

Kulik's first cinema film, *The Explosive Generation* (1961), like many

films of its period, was aimed specifically at the teenage market with its story based on fact, of a high-school teacher (William Shatner) sacked for teaching sex education. The director's next, *The Yellow Canary* (1963), was an ill-advised attempt by the pop star Pat Boone to shed his clean-cut image by playing a self-serving and generally unpleasant singer whose child is kidnapped.

Neither Boone nor thriller fans liked the film any more than the

critics did, but a later thriller, *The Warning Shot* (1967), is probably Kulik's best film, an intriguing mystery in which a policeman (David Janssen) apparently kills an unarmed man and meets a colourful bunch of characters amidst considerable mayhem in his search for the truth. With a good script and a fine supporting cast, including Lillian Gish, Walter Pidgeon, George Grizzard, Joan Collins, Eleanor Parker and George Sanders, Kulik's

no-frills direction served the material well.

Villa Rides (1968) is probably the film that stifled Kulik's cinema career. Given a big budget, a cast headed by Yul Brynner (with a hairpiece) and Robert Mitchum, and a script by Sam Peckinpah and Robert Towne, it should have been a fine adventure yarn, but despite some spectacular aerial shots of battling armies it emerged as unfocused, sprawling and, despite lots of violent action,

somewhat dull. The *New York Daily News*, commenting on Mitchum's sleepy performance, added, "One can't really blame Mitchum for doing off. This is perhaps one of the most tiresome action movies on record."

Kulik fared better with the modest *Riot* (1969), filmed in the Arizona State Penitentiary, though the film's excessive violence was criticised - it was suggested that the director was making the most of his freedom from the blander restrictions of television drama. His infrequent later movies included the Burt Reynolds thriller *Shamus* (1972) and Steve McQueen's final film, the disappointing *Hunter* (1980).

It was television, though, that found the director at his best, and *Brian's Song* (1971), based on the true story of the friendship between two football players, one of whom is dying of cancer, received so much acclaim (the critic Leonard Maltin calls it "a milestone of excellence in made-for-TV movies") that it became one of the few television films subsequently to achieve a cinema release. Later in the year, its victory at the Emmy ceremonies was greeted by a sustained cheer from the audience.

Kulik directed several mini-series including the first ever, *Vanished* (1970), plus *From Here to Eternity* (1975) and *Kane and Abel* (1985). He also directed an excellent account of a true crime, *The Lindbergh Kidnapping Case* (1976), with a fine performance by Anthony Hopkins as the kidnapper Bruno Hauptmann, and another powerful true story, *Exit Me If You Can* (1977), an anti-capital-punishment depiction of the 12 years the condemned Caryl Chessman spent on San Quentin's death row before being executed.

TOM VALLANCE
Seymour ("Buzz") Kulik, film and television director: born Kearny, New Jersey 1922; married one son, one daughter; died Los Angeles 13 January 1999.

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الجمعة 29 يناير 1999

OBITUARIES/7

Walter Birks

IF WALTER Birks had followed his pre-war calling he would have died a Cathar pope, leader of the heretical religious sect based at the ruined castle of Montségur in the foothills of the French Pyrenees.

He was anointed as the chosen one in 1938 by the Cathar movement's then leader Antonin Gadal, but Birks' subsequent spiritual experiences while serving in the Middle East during the Second World War led him to rethink his vocation. He later became an authority on the so-called "treasure of Montségur" and published a book on the history of Catharism.

After studying history at Merton College, Oxford, in the early 1930s, Birks fell in with a crowd who were involved in spiritualist activities. He went to lectures given by the occultist Dion Fortune and was inspired to devote his life to the supernatural. He later said: "She was a marvellous speaker and a whole new world opened up to me – or so I thought at the time. I was immensely impressed and joined an occult order."

During a seance he was given instructions from the White Eagle Lodge, a spiritualist circle, to go to the Pyrenees and recover traces of a brotherhood: "I was teaching at a school in Wales, but was instructed by the Order to resign because a great job was planned for me." There he met Gadal, successor to Adolphe Garrigou (1802–1897), the Cathar patriarch who had kept the flame of the sect alive during the 19th century. Birks wrote in his diary: "I was greeted by Antonin Gadal who told me that he had been awaiting my arrival in 'the year of the Grail'."

Although it has its roots in much older religious movements, Catharism broke away from the Catholic Church during the 12th century. Initially Cathars were tolerated, but when a delegation went to Rome in 1179 to seek recognition, its members were forbidden to preach. Similar revolts against the established church burned out rapidly, but the movement in the South of France gave the pontiff cause for concern. Indeed, by the end of the 12th century Catharism had virtually displaced the Church of Rome as the recognised vehicle of Christian revelation throughout the Languedoc.

It claimed to be nothing less than the true Church of Christ, its orders handed down in unbroken succession from the Apostles. Furthermore, the Cathars reputedly held great treasures within their citadel base of Montségur at Ussat-les-Bains, in the valley of the Ariège.

Catharism was a strange and heterodox creed which rejected sub-



stantial parts of both the Old and the New Testaments, while condemning the Pope, priests and sacraments alike. Given the established Church's firm application of law during the Middle Ages, an unhappy end was inevitable. Pope Innocent IV felt obliged to act. A series of missions, denunciations, excommunications and inquisitions failed to make any impact. And so, on 16

spoke with those who knew of the Cathars. Gadal was himself an inspiring speaker and the power of his oratory coupled with his utter sincerity convinced Birks that Gadal possessed hidden spiritual truths. Furthermore, Gadal was only too willing to share these truths with the eager scholar.

Birks settled in happily, assisting Gadal in his work and acting as his

"There has been masses of occult nonsense written about Cathars. I believed it all those years ago but now know it is a lot of hooey."

March 1244, following a 10-month siege, more than 200 Cathars were taken from the castle of Montségur and burned alive in the fields below. But they went to their deaths in the knowledge that their treasure had been smuggled safely out by just four of their number who had scaled sheer cliff faces in the dead of night.

During 1937 and 1938 Birks explored the castle and the surrounding caves which had become holy sites. He also

amenuensis. Gadal in turn enabled Birks to become manager of both the local spas and the nearby Grand Hôtel des Bains.

Known locally as "the Cathar pope", Gadal was by now more than 60 years old. During 1938 he came to the decision that Birks was to be his successor and, on 16 September that year, a formal ceremony took place in the nearby rock church of Ortolac in which the young Englishman was duly anointed.

Meanwhile, war in Europe was on the horizon. Returning home, Birks was commissioned into the British Security Mission in Syria. For three years he was Head of Mission in Latakia, a particularly sensitive area close to the Turkish border. There, a friendship with a representative of the local Nossairi religion led him to rethink his spiritual views. He later wrote: "It was there, high in the Nossairi mountains, under the clear stars, that I finally shed the fantasies of occultism and realised the true nature of the Cathar treasure."

After the war Birks returned to Ussat-les-Bains where he and Gadal attempted to revive the fortunes of the spa, but post-war austerity did not encourage tourism and in 1948 the lease was surrendered. It was during a series of subsequent teaching posts in Cairo, Istanbul and Tripoli that Birks began to write down his many thoughts on Catharism.

In 1957 – almost 20 years after his retirement from teaching – he finally published his *magnum opus* on the subject. It was a joint publication with the writer Robert Gilbert, entitled *The Treasure of Montségur*, and opened up for the first time the truth about the Cathars and their secret treasure, a treasure that was more spiritual than material.

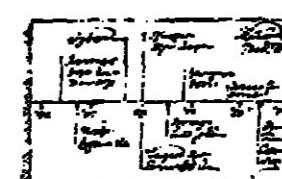
As Birks pointed out in the book, the four who escaped death by fire in 1244 had such a difficult route out of the castle they certainly could not have hauled material possessions. "All the natural treasure like gold has long gone. And going down a steep hill on ropes meant that they could not have carried anything with them. If all the Cathars had been exterminated their claim would have died with them."

Birks retired to a quiet flat in a residential quarter of Bath. He lectured in history and religion at the city's Technical College and was latterly a tourist guide for the Mayor of Bath's Corps of Honorary Guides, where his erudition and knowledge of languages came in useful.

By the end of his life Birks viewed the Cathars with barely disguised contempt: "There has been masses of occult nonsense written about Cathars. I believe it all those years ago but now know it is a lot of hooey. Montségur is rather like Glastonbury. It attracts all the weirdies and bearded looking for treasure. They all think they know the answer, but the occult is a lot of baloney."

TIM BULLAMORE

Walter Newbigging Birks, teacher and religious leader: born Middlesbrough 25 January 1912; MBE 1968; died Bath 25 January 1999.



HISTORICAL NOTES

RAYMOND LAMONT-BROWN

A perfect and popular royal mistress

"WHERE'S ALICE?" the crowds would shout if Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, appeared in London's theatre land without the Hon Mrs George Keppel in his entourage. A leader of the fashionable set and one of the best-known society hostesses of the Edwardian era, Alice Keppel entertained most of the influential members of the political elite and the diplomatic and civil service of her day. She was one of the readily recognisable royal mistresses of any age. Keppel unabashedly used her access to the monarch to further her own ends, and became a well-consulted link between sovereign and establishment.

The youngest daughter of a retired admiral and Scottish MP the 30-year-old Alice Keppel met the 57-year-old Prince of Wales in 1898, and as Sir Philip Magnus-Alcock was to note in his biography of Edward "an understanding" was formed between them "almost overnight". Alice became Edward's mistress for the rest of his life. She was perfect for the job. She was a royal confidante who knew not to gossip about what she heard in the inner royal circle. She had great skill in mollifying her royal lover; whose temper was uncertain and his patience thin. She understood his character and his physical and emotional needs, and helped calm him down when he might say unguarded things about foreign poli-

cry or domestic affairs in his kingdom. She was able to turn the often bored, petulant, aggressive, immature, selfish and rude monarch into the genial, tolerant and witty sovereign that people loved.

Through her royal associations, Alice became a rich woman, the king encouraging his rich friends like Sir Ernest Cassel to help her build funds that would keep her social position secure. Yet Alice's society skies were not cloudless. She was not welcome in certain houses like that of the Duke of Norfolk at Arundel, or the Duke of Portland at Welbeck Abbey; and William Waldegrave Astor stopped inviting her to Cliveden when, as he said, Alice "had sunk to the level of a public strumpet". Others frowned on what they saw as her rapaciousness: Virginia Woolf described Alice as an "old grasper"; whose fads had been in the moneybags these 50 years".

Queen Alexandra accepted Alice Keppel as her husband's royal mistress, in a long line of such. In time though, the lonely, neglected Queen became depressed and her congenital deafness caused her to withdraw from society functions; this was exacerbated by her irritation at the constant presence of Alice at the King's shoulder.

She understood his character and his physical and emotional needs, and helped calm him down when he might say unguarded things about foreign poli-

Violet and Sonia, every year around March, Alice's progress through France was enjoyed in some grandeur as functionaries at border and station treated her with the respect and dignity the French had always shown royal mistresses. Only at Biarritz could Alice and the King act as husband and wife.

No royal mistress was devastated as Alice was at the death of King Edward VII in 1910. Severely depressed, she informed her society friends of the scene at the dying King's bedside. Her words were pure fantasy. Alice avowed that Queen Alexandra had summoned her, and when Alice left, the sobbing Queen clung to her arm promising that the Royal Family would look after her. The King's physician, Sir James Reid, and his private secretary, Francis Knollys, told a different story. The King had barely recognised her and Alice had been ushered from his bedside in a state of hysterics. Yet Alice's version persisted for decades.

Alice Keppel remains in history as the perfect royal mistress. In an age when the House of Lords is to be crammed with "people's peers" she might have earned the position of "People's Mistress".

Raymond Lamont-Brown is the author of "Edward VII's Lost Loves: Alice Keppel & Agnes Keyser" (Sutton Publishing, £19.99)

Gabor Carelli

THE HUNGARIAN-BORN tenor Gabor Carelli is of immortality in the world of opera, because he sang the small role of Dr Caius in the NBC Symphony broadcast of Verdi's *Falstaff*, conducted by Arturo Toscanini in 1951. This performance was recorded and reissued many times as technology advanced, and is currently available on CD.

Carelli appeared at the Metropolitan Opera for nearly a quarter of a century, and though he sang small roles for the most part, he formed an integral cog in the great machine required to keep a major opera house functioning smoothly.

Born in Budapest, Carelli studied Law at the University of Budapest, and gained his degree. Meanwhile he

also studied singing at the Franz Liszt Academy, and finally decided on singing rather than law as a profession. He went to Italy to study further with the great tenor Beniamino Gigli in Rome, and after two years he made his debut as Rodolfo in *La Bohème* at Florence. He sang in various Italian opera houses, then in 1939 he went to the United States. For several years he toured the country with travelling operatic companies, and also sang with many of the American orchestras in such performances as the Verdi *Requiem*, Puccini's *Messia en Gloria* and Kodály's *Psalmus Hungaricus*.

In 1951 Carelli made his debut at the Met as Don Curzio, the stuttering lawyer in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. As well as the famous Toscanini recording of *Falstaff*, Carelli recorded

Over the next 23 seasons he sang more than a thousand performances there of 59 roles in 39 operas. Many of these were Italian roles, such as Dr Caius in *Falstaff*, Mozart's Don Basilio, the Judge in Verdi's *Un ballo in maschera*, or Pong in Puccini's *Turandot*, but he also took on parts in the German repertoire, as a waiter in Richard Strauss's *Arabella*, the First Priest in *Die Zauberflöte*, and many others.

Occasionally Carelli was given some performances of a major role, as in 1957 when he sang Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, receiving an excellent notice from the renowned New York Times critic Harold Schonberg.

As well as the famous Toscanini recording of *Falstaff*, Carelli recorded

his usual roles, Don Basilio and Don Curzio, in *Le nozze di Figaro*, the tenor solo in the Verdi *Requiem*, and a role in Haydn's opera *Orlando Paladino*. These recordings reveal a lyrical voice, a stylish technique and, especially in the *Falstaff*, an aptitude for comedy.

In 1964 he joined the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music as a voice teacher. In 1971, to mark the 20th anniversary of his debut at the Met, he was awarded a silver bowl for long service with the company. He retired from singing in 1974, but continued to teach until his death.

ELIZABETH FORBES

Gabor Carelli, tenor: born Budapest 1915; died New York 22 January 1999.

GAZETTE

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

BIRTHDAYS

Dr Robin Alston, bibliographer; 66; Mr Malcolm Binns, concert pianist; 63; Lord Braybrooke, Lord-Lieutenant of Essex; 67; Mr Leslie Brimrose, composer; 68; Mr Peter Byrne, actor and director; 71; Lord Clyde, a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary; 67; Dr Alec Coppen, neuro-psychiatrist; 76; The Right Rev Dom Charles Fitzgerald-Lombard, Abbot of Downside; 58; Mr John Forsythe, actor; 82; Professor Germaine Greer, writer; 60; Lord Gregson, non-executive director; Fairley Group; 75; Professor Frank Hartvel, Vice-Chancellor, Cranfield University; 57; Mr Timothy Healy, actor and comedian; 47; Mr Paul Hodder-Williams, publisher; 88; Earl Junkin, actor and scriptwriter; 66; Mr Sean Kerly, hockey player; 39; Miss Margaret Laird, third Church Estates Commissioner; 66; Lord Lane of Horsell, chartered accountant and company chairman; 74; Mr Henry Lewis, former deputy chairman, Berisford International; 73; Mr Victor Mavor, Head Master, Rugby School; 52; Sir Richard Needham, former MP; 57; Mr James Nicholson, MEE; 54; Miss Katharine Ross, actress; 56; Mr Tom Selleck, actor; 54; Mr Raman Subba Row, former chairman, Test and County Cricket Board; 57; Mr Brian Trubshaw, former test pilot; 75.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Lucy Hutchinson, biographer; 1620; Thomas Paine, writer and reformer; 1737; Sir Ebenezer Howard, garden cities originator; 1850; Anton Pavlovich Chekhov, playwright; 1860; Frederick Delius, composer; 1862; Sir William Rothenstein, artist; 1872; W.C. Fields (William Claude Dukinfield), comedian; 1880; Deaths: King George III; 1820; Edward Lear, landscape painter and writer; 1888; Alfred Sisley, painter; 1899; Douglas, first Earl Haig, field marshal; 1928; Henry Louis Mencken, writer, author of *The American Language*; 1956; Angela Margaret Thirkell, novelist; 1961; Robert Lee Frost, poet; 1963; Alan Ladd, actor; 1964; Jimmie (James Francis) Durante, comedian; 1960. On this day: Greenwich Mean Time was adopted in Scotland; 1848; the marriage of Napoleon III and Eugénie de Montijo took place at the Tuilleries, Paris; 1853; the Victoria Cross was founded; 1856; *Desert Island Discs* was first broadcast; 1942.

LECTURES

Tate Gallery: Sir John Morley, "Surrealism as Shell Shock: the impact of war on Surrealism"; 1pm. Centre for Regional Studies, Cambridge: Dr Bill Stevenson, "Dissenters in Cambridge: 1640–1725 and their Place in Society"; 6.30pm.

DINNERS

European-Atlantic Group Professor Ottmar Issing, European Central Bank in Frankfurt, was the guest speaker at the European-Atlantic Group House of Commons meeting held yesterday. He spoke on "The First Four Weeks of the Year". Lord Dahrendorf, President of the Group, presided at the Dinner-Discussion which followed at St Ermin's Hotel, London SW1. Admiral of the Fleet Sir Julian Oswald and Sir Michael Palliser also spoke.

SYNAGOGUE SERVICES

Dates of synagogue services to be held tomorrow may be obtained by telephoning the following. Sabbath begins in London at 4.29pm. United Synagogues: 0171-293 2242. Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues: 0171-590 1662. Reform Synagogue of Great Britain: 0181-346 6711. Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue: 0171-293 2572. New London Synagogue (Oxford): 0171-328 1625.

WHERE A commercial institution wished to impose absolute liability on a member of a profession it should do in clear terms so that the professional could appreciate the extent of the obligation he was accepting.

The Court of Appeal dismissed the bank's appeal against the dismissal of its claim for damages against a firm of solicitors it had retained to obtain a signature on a mortgage. Mr Dukes and his family company were customers of the bank. The bank increased the limit on the family company's overdraft, in return for which Mr Dukes deposited with the bank the deeds and conveyance of a property owned by his wife. He also deposited a letter of consent which purported to have been signed by Mrs Dukes but which had actually been signed by someone else.

Mr Dukes subsequently used a "desk valuation" of the property to persuade the bank to make him a loan, the security for which was an "all monies" security, which involved recharging the property. The bank wrote on 18 March 1988 to the defendant firm, who had been nominated by Mr Dukes, retaining them to obtain the signatures of Mr and Mrs Dukes to various documents, including Mrs Dukes's signature to the charge. The charge contained a certificate to be signed by the solicitors, certifying that the contents and purport of the document had been fully explained to Mrs Dukes, and that she had signed it of her own free will.

The documents were returned to the bank apparently

whether the solicitors had intended to give a promise to answer for the fraud of the customer even if that fraud could not be detected by exercising all proper care.

The answer to that question had to be no, unless the language used, looked at as a whole, indicated compellingly to the contrary. It was necessary in the present case to concentrate on the primary document, which was the letter of 18 March. Although it instructed the solicitors to obtain the signatures of Mr and Mrs Dukes, and to explain the implications of the mortgage to Mrs Dukes, such obligations were not likely to be absolute: they were better suited to a requirement to exercise a reasonable standard of care.

The court did not feel constrained by the decision in *Zweibner v Mortgage Corporation* (unreported, 18 June 1998), in which the obligation had been to "properly execute" the documents, and in which an undertaking rather than a certificate had been involved. A certificate should not be assimilated with an undertaking.

If commercial institutions such as banks wished to impose absolute liability on members of a profession such as solicitors they should do so in clear terms so that the solicitors could appreciate the extent of the obligation they were accepting. Unless the language used in a retainer clearly had that consequence, the court should not be ready to impose obligations on solicitors which even the most careful solicitor might not be able to meet.

KATE O'HANLON, Barrister

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE

niggardly, adj.

spear and Sidney ("so sluttish a vice"). The OED, more cautious in its etymology (obscure), offers such meanings as narrow and a false bottom.

Nigger is another complex matter, and Mr Howard's fate reminds us that Orwell's *Poems and the English Language* was his most prescient writing.

There's nowt so queer as blokes

ONE OF the most heart-warming changes in society over the past 20 years has been in the attitudes towards gays. The ignorance of the Seventies was summed up by the stock line of lads in pubs if anyone vaguely, slightly, in any way camp walked through the door: "Uh oh, watch yourselves, backs against the wall."

What do blokes who say this imagine? Do they honestly think that gay men are likely to go into a pub and think "Aha, they're off their guard - I'll screw the lot of them".

Back then there was no Julian Clary, or Chris Smith or Ellen or Barrymore or George Michael. And now it no longer shocks, to anything like the same degree, when a club on a main road in Brixton gyrates under the name "Love Muscle".

"You do realise it's gay night," you're warned as you buy your ticket. As if anyone's likely to have got that far, and say: "Oh, I wondered why the queue was full of men in vests, with their arms around each other. And why there's a huge screen by the door, showing a naked man writhing on a mattress. So this

isn't line-dancing night, then?"

How could this place be categorised, apart from gay? To earn the title of rave, a club has to be sweaty and packed, with no room for any type of dancing apart from wriggling on the spot and waving arms in the air, as if you're milking an exceptionally tall cow. If Gene Kelly had gone to a rave, he'd have had to abandon any hopes of walking up walls or gliding over settees, and opt for the tall cow dance. (Though a tab of Ecstasy is the only plausible explanation for anyone going "Wow, it's raining" and dancing in puddles.)

But once a few gaps appear on the dancefloor, the mood switches from the ebullience of a rave to the self-consciousness and doubt of a disco, as there are now enough spaces for it to be evident that you're a crap dancer. And this is what "Love Muscle" seemed to be; an enormous gay version of a Seventies school disco. The music could fool you into thinking it's modern, but was mostly tunes from the Seventies under a rapid beat. There was Donna Summer, The Sweet, Village People, anything from

that era, until you wondered whether there'd be drum'n'bass versions of Aled Jones and the theme tune from *On The Buses*.

The event is less outrageous than a typical heterosexual nightclub, with names like "Sinatras". No one staggers drunkenly backwards spraying lager and demolishing tables. If you brush past someone, they smile at you, but don't hitch their shoulders up and quip "All right mate, wotch it". In the toilets, everyone forms an orderly queue, none of the men swearing that they're gonna have that bastard, and no women are being consoled by their friends as they alternate between sobbing uncontrollably and honking Hooch into a basin.

Some of the men remove their tops, but that's about it for scandal. Although, as with any disco, behind the thumping rhythms and apparent jollity, soap-opera sagas are rapidly unfolding. From the balcony, 500 dancers appear remarkably similar, but some will be itching with anticipation, some goey with affection, and others about to have a screaming row

MARK STEEL



ON LOCATION

punctuated with yells of "WHAT? I CAN'T HEAR YOU. DID YOU SAY YOU DID OR DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE ME? HANG ON, WAIT TILL THE RECORD ENDS."

So a special bar, packed and steaming, is situated at one side for chatting purposes. I bought a drink there and thought: "Hmm, the problem with standing here alone is someone will start chatting me up, and I'll have to explain that I'm heterosexual and I'm doing a newspaper article and it will all get confusing..." Ten minutes later,

still in the same spot I was thinking "Oy. What's wrong with me, then?"

Maybe it was my reaction to the artistic high point of the evening, when thousands of balloons were released from the ceiling and within moments they'd all been burst. The correct response, it seemed, was to jump on as many balloons as possible, going "wheeee". Whereas I stood there, thinking: "Oh no, someone must have spent all day blowing them up. Well, at least save some for taking home."

Gay scene culture is not always easy to grasp. For example, I've never understood why certain women become gay icons. Why Xena the Warrior Princess and Kylie Minogue? Why not Gloria Huniford or Margaret Beckett?

But there was one change in the gay scene that even I could spot. In the Seventies, it was divided between those that wanted to actively oppose the "backs against the wall" mentality, and those that preferred to turn a cheek, have a good time and just hope. The

political faction, aware that gays weren't alone in being trodden on, became drawn into a series of other battles. They became a key part of anti-racist campaigns, and the 1984 Gay Pride march was led by striking miners.

The period began with the Gay Liberation Front disrupting an anti-gay rally, organised by The Festival of Light and fronted by Cliff Richard and Mary Whitehouse, by releasing thousands of mice into the audience. It continued into the Eighties, with attempts to counter scapegoating of gays for AIDS. Throughout that time, almost every gay club exhibited at least a little resistance, even if it was just a few posters on walls, and a pile of campaigning newspapers by the door.

Gay discs would do better to revive that era's sense of resistance, rather than its music. Instead there were no posters, and the only paper on offer was Boyz, a soft-porn rag with an editorial covering the tribulations of approaching 30. Which would be fine, if everything had been won. But despite the advances, equality is still a long way off.

especially for working-class gays outside the major cities. And with the guard down, there's no guarantee that the situation can't go into reverse.

Which would be disastrous for heterosexuals as well as for gays. Because while you're yelling "Backs against the wall", you can never hear stories like this. "Last week," I was told by a man who looked disarmingly innocent, "I got a call from a man who wanted to meet me in a pub.

"Well we met up, and he had a friend. He said he wanted to watch his friend and I wrestle in the nude. I tried to explain that this wasn't a good idea, but he wasn't having it. So we got back to his place, his friend and I stripped off, and I hurled the friend straight against the wall and knocked him out. 'Is that it?' he said. I said: 'I tried to tell you but you weren't listening. I'm a black-belt in judo, you see.' So it was all a bit of a failure and I went home."

How much more impressive than a typical heterosexual failure: "I asked her in for a coffee, but she said she had to go home and feed her cat."

The day East Timor was deleted



Cyberspace is turning nasty - and this time it's political. The virtual world is under attack by terrorist hackers. By Charles Arthur

East Timor disappeared from the map the other day. The removal was not physical: there was no tsunami or underwater volcano to swallow up the island, which has been illegally occupied by the Indonesian government since 1975.

Its disappearance was prompted by an invisible flood of electronic pulses which poured down the telephone wires into a small office in Dublin, Ireland. "I go a yell from the other room. 'Unplug now,' and I ran down the stairs and unplugged it from the wall: no ifs or buts," recalls John Plunkett, a systems administrator at Connect Ireland, an Internet service provider.

From that moment, anyone trying to e-mail somebody with an East Timor address, or access one of the country's Web pages, would have faced a blank screen. It was one of the most effective cyber-terrorism attacks on record: a whole country was suddenly cut off from the outside cyberworld.

Many countries would see this kind of co-ordinated attack as a mere foreshadowing of what could be on the way. With society so interconnected, so reliant on multiple sources of media, the best way to strike at a country is to sabotage its lines of communication. The most effective attack is the one your enemy does not know is coming, does not even know has occurred. Last March Louis Freeh, the director of the FBI, asked a Senate committee for increased funding to cover "several priority initiatives, including those in the areas of counter-terrorism and cyber-crime". The week before, Mr Maguire, a director at Connect Ireland, knew that in setting up a "virtual" East Timor on his company's computers he was taking some risks. "It's a virtual country in that in political terms, it is not allowed to exist in the real world by the Indonesian government - they just call it part of Indonesia - so it's only sovereignty is in cyberspace."

On 7 December 1997, the 22nd anniversary of the island's invasion, he registered his company as the "top level domain" for East Timor (their machines

.tp" (the allotted abbreviation of Timorese Internet addresses, just as ".uk" denotes British people and organisations).

That was not popular with the Indonesian authorities: a spokesman for the Indonesian embassy in London said: "The handover of the domain to the government of East Timor is beyond imagination, since the government of East Timor did not exist."

Four months later the hacking attacks began. The first ones were clumsy. But they grew increasingly sophisticated until last week they reached a level where the hackers could have altered the crucial database: thus someone trying to find a "Free East Timor" page might instead have been directed to "Why Indonesia Was Right To Invade". There would be no way for the casual surfer to know that their computer had been subverted.

It was so well organised, so deliberate and so skilful that whoever was doing it must be getting paid," said Mr Maguire.

The attack has been repelled for now, but were it not for careful monitoring of systems, East

It was one of the most effective attacks on record: a whole country was suddenly cut off from the outside world

Timor might have disappeared as a separate entity for the second time in its existence.

The United States military and government are aware that wars in the future will be fought on every front, including the virtual one. On the same day that Freeh was asking for more cash, Bill Gates, head of Microsoft, was insisting to another Senate committee that his company does not have a monopoly in the world of computers. With a nice sense of irony, a team of hackers launched an attack within the US which froze thousands of machines - in military and government offices - connected to the Internet. The hackers made their point: they only targeted machines running Microsoft's Windows software.

But why, you may wonder, should an attack on the "virtual" East Timor lead to a computer being hastily unplugged in Dublin? Questions like that assume that the real world somehow maps directly to that of cyberspace. But as more people are discovering, that is not how it works. Cyberspace is taking on the characteristics of the world which Gibson, in his groundbreaking science-fiction novel *Neuromancer*, described. It isn't real,

but it affects you profoundly every day. In the virtual world, power does not depend on how big you are physically; it depends on how much notice people take of you, and how much attention you can force them to pay. The virtual world of East Timor may reside in a Dublin computer. You can also perform cyber-terrorism against people, companies, entire classes of software (such as Microsoft's operating systems). It doesn't take a gun or physical training.

An eager hacker with a good supply of fizzy drinks and an Internet connection can bring any of the above to their knees - virtually speaking (and physically, if they end up having to unplug their computer).

Yet sometimes, becoming a virtual country offers real benefits. Tonga, for example, has the fortuitous suffix of ".to". And with English still the dominant language on the Web, that attracted the attention of companies eager to have a snappy address: would a travel agent be interested by the address "www.go.to/australia" or "www.go.to/japan"? For Tonga, with a gross domestic product of only about £120m, the £100 registration fee for each new domain in its corner of cyberspace would come in handy.

The Net is also becoming a more political place - where revolutionary groups decide who will host their Web page almost before they decide when to start the revolution, and hackers change the contents of political parties' Web pages (as happened to both the Tories and Labour at the last election).

Harmless stuff? Not necessarily. The other day, California saw its first court case brought under a "cyberstalker" law that came into force on 1 January. The prosecution claims that after a woman rejected his physical advances, Gary Dellapenta placed an ad under her name on a bulletin board, claiming she was seeking male partners to help her live out a rape fantasy. Those who responded (and you must wonder about their mental state) were sent her physical description, address and details of her home alarm. Dellapenta has pleaded not guilty. But the fact that such a law has been deemed necessary shows how the virtual world is lapping over into our physical one.

The more immediate worries are in the real world. Connect Ireland knows a little about that: it has tweaked the nose of a government which has (as a representative admitted on TV recently) engaged in torture and rape. That is hardly something to be done lightly. About a year ago, Mr Maguire recalls, he got "a couple of phone calls from, shall I say, an Eastern gentleman. They weren't very nice."

Was he worried? He chuckles. "I said look pal, you can't worry me. I'm Irish. I've been terrorised by professionals." He chuckles again.

CLASSIFIED

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Notice of the Amendment to Custodian Fee of The Thailand Fund

To: Unitholders of The Thailand Fund

The Thai Securities and Exchange Commission has approved the reduction of the Custodian Fee of the Thailand Fund (the "Fund") from 0.1% to 0.08% per annum of the Net Asset Value of the Fund, effective January 30th, 1999.

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SCIENCE

I think therefore I'm a chimp

Are animals conscious, sentient creatures? Research suggests that some are. By Sanjida O'Connell

Dr Miriam Rothschild had an owl that became so jealous when Rothschild's daughter was born, that the bird would try to attack both her and the child. Animals can often appear to have emotions, to be highly intelligent, motivated and sentient – but are they truly conscious?

Consciousness is a topic long avoided by the scientific community, but it has troubled philosophers for hundreds of years. Each one of us knows that we are conscious but we cannot know what consciousness is like for anyone else. Given the private and subjective nature of human consciousness, it would seem almost impossible to determine whether another species is conscious. But although we can never get inside the head of another creature, science is increasingly developing techniques to understand consciousness.

Stephen Budiansky, the author of *If a Lion Could Talk*, says: "We ought to have an open mind about animal consciousness. But we also have to be sceptical, because we as humans have an almost compulsive tendency to interpret the world as a mirror of our own minds. When we see an animal behaving in an intelligent, flexible fashion we automatically assume that it must have a conscious mind much like ours."

But it is possible for minds to display highly intelligent processes without these being conscious. Computers certainly do so; and even we perform many tasks that are done completely unconsciously."

A condition known as "blindsight" may help us understand what it might be like to be fully functioning and awake, but unconscious. "Graham" had an accident when he was eight years old which damaged part of the visual cortex, the section of his brain that processes sight. He is now blind on the right-hand side of his body, and because of the unusual nature of his syndrome, he has become a semi-professional research subject for scientists.

When he is forced to guess the location of objects placed on his blind side, their shape, direction of movement and even their colours, he is nearly always correct. "It's a very bizarre feeling to sit there and be told events are taking place on your right-hand side – as far as I am concerned, nothing at all happens," says Graham.

Graham is unconscious of his sense of sight. His brain has compensated for the damage by pro-

cessing his vision through an older pathway in the midbrain, which allows his brain to "see" without his having a conscious image in his mind of what he sees. This may be the way animals operate – guessing accurately about what they see, but with no awareness of it. Evidence that this may be the case for some animals comes from brain studies of pigeons and tree shrews, which also process their sight along the same ancient pathway as Graham does.

The situation may be different for bigger-brained animals. In the Seve-
n Cambridge University, was working with a monkey that had no visual cortex. Helen was, to all intents and purposes, completely blind.

Humphrey reports: "I had a hunch that there was something going on which might reveal a capacity for sight which even she wasn't aware of. I started working with her and... a miracle happened. Within a few days, she was beginning to attend to what I was doing. Within a

'The hallmark of consciousness is understanding the mind of another conscious being'

few years, you wouldn't have known that there was anything abnormal about her. Helen had somehow developed an ability to see without being conscious." The nearest analogy for it, he says, is ESP. "You know what's out there, but you don't know how you know it."

It seems that animals that process their vision in the same way as us – via the cortex (and are not brain-damaged) – may well be conscious. We have had a notoriously difficult time trying to define consciousness, but perhaps it may best be understood in two ways. The first is what philosophers refer to as *qualia*. This basically describes how sensations and experiences are perceived by an individual. If some animals do have this kind of consciousness, this is what they will be aware of – the unique experience of being alive, and how the world feels to a particular animal. A philosopher, Thomas Nagel, wrote a seminal paper in the Seventies entitled What is It Like to Be a Bat?

Graham says these results show that the chimpanzees understand that another chimp is ignorant of a potentially dangerous situation.

Not all animals may show the reflective self-awareness and aware-

ness in the dark, but what we do know is that there is something that it is like to be a bat.

The more sophisticated kinds of consciousness, such as self-awareness and awareness of other minds, may well be beyond the cognitive capacity of most animals. One of the ways of testing self-awareness is the so-called mirror test. Only children over the age of 18 months, great apes and, possibly, dolphins seem to be able to recognise themselves in the mirror. However, Dr Celia Hayes, a psychologist from University College London, disputes the claims made for this test. "When most people talk about self-awareness, they mean that the individual with self-awareness knows certain things about their body, and they know these things consciously – for example, that it's mortal, that your body contains a unique mind. You can pass the mirror test without knowing that you're mortal or that you're unique – all you have to be able to do is to spot certain links or connections between your body and the mirror image."

Most animals certainly seem to have a physical awareness of their own bodies – they know where they end and the world begins, and consequently can fly, run or jump without major catastrophes – but few, if any, animals have the kind of self-awareness that Hayes describes.

The final hallmark of consciousness is understanding the mind of another conscious being and again, there is only experimental evidence to suggest that our closest living relative, the chimpanzee, may approach this level of conscious awareness.

Professor Sally Boysen, from the University of Ohio, tested chimpanzees' understanding of other chimps' mental states. The worst thing that can happen to a chimp in her lab is vaccination: they are terrified of needles. Boysen approached a cage in which one chimpanzee could see her and another could not. When the chimpanzee that had not seen her was allowed out of the cage (apparently to be vaccinated), the chimp that had seen her started to bark, erect its hair and pull an expression of fear while looking at the chimp that was ignorant of the situation. If Sally approached the cage with food, the chimp that knew what was going on made none of these warning signals to the chimp in the inner enclosure.

Boysen says these results show that the chimpanzees understand that another chimp is ignorant of a potentially dangerous situation.

Chimpanzees are able to warn fellow chimps of potential dangers

Havakuk Levison

"I've spent the last 24 years in the company of chimpanzees, and there's no question in my mind that they are sentient, conscious beings, who are ever processing what's happening around them. They're on an almost even par with us in terms of their abilities to reflect on themselves and others around them."

Not all animals may show the reflective self-awareness and aware-

ness of other minds that perhaps mould our consciousness, and many may indeed possess little conscious awareness. However, a number of species could be conscious – we may not know what their conscious awareness is like, but there is something that it is like to be a bat, a bird or a beluga whale, if not a bacterium. When I asked Dr Miriam Rothschild what it was like to be a dog,

she said: "I believe that dogs really see the world in a series of smells... and I often think that they have a rather poor life, because they live in a world where they only see everybody from the knee downwards, and with very nasty, smelly feet."

Sanjida O'Connell is the producer of 'Are Animals Conscious?', to be shown on BBC 2, 6pm, 30 January

UPDATE

THE COUNCIL of Europe is to vote today on whether to impose a moratorium on clinical trials of xenotransplantation, in which animal organs are transplanted into humans. The vote, which is expected to halt plans for trials, would be a political rather than a scientific decision, and probably not binding on member countries. But it reflects increasing worries that animals' DNA hides pathogens which could have drastic effects on human organ recipients.

THE WORLD has a brand-new, superheavy element. Or it did. A team at the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research at Dubna, near Moscow, synthesised a new element containing 114 protons and 175 neutrons.

It was achieved by bombarding neutron-enriched plutonium with a calcium isotope. The as-yet unnamed element survived about 30 seconds – much longer than other synthesised elements, which last a few fractions of a second. Theory had predicted that element 114 might lie in an "island of stability" among the heavy elements, which the experiment seems to show.

RESEARCH FROM Holland suggests that DNA from ingested plants and food has a half-life of about six minutes in the human gut. It also found that genetically modified bacteria can transfer their genes to bacteria in the gut, if the two microbes are sufficiently closely linked (say, both from the Enterococcus family).

However, worries that the work, reported in *New Scientist*, could lead to new "superbugs" as food with genes for antibiotic resistance is eaten by animals, were discounted by John Beringer, head of the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment. The risk of such events is very, very small, he said – and many people already have gut bacteria resistant to ampicillin, the antibiotic commonly used for resistant bacteria.

CHARLES ARTHUR

The Sky at Night column will appear in next week's science page

THE INDEPENDENT
Proudly support a D&AD President's Lecture.

Julien Temple

1999

The director of the cult movies *Absolute Beginners* and *Earth Girls are Easy* talks about his new film *Vigo*, inspired by the work of the visionary French film-maker Jean Vigo. The film is a passionate portrayal of his life.

Questions and answers will be followed by a special preview of the film *Vigo* which precedes its theatrical release in the UK in the Spring.

Thursday 25 February
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TECHNOQUEST

Q The Moon orbits the Earth every month. Why then isn't there a solar eclipse (where the Moon blocks out the Sun) every month?

The Moon's orbit is tilted in relation to that of the Earth around the Sun by 5.2 degrees. The lunar orbit does not oscillate, so the moon's orbital plane does not rotate as the Earth rotates around the Sun. This means that an eclipse occurs only if the alignment of Moon, Sun and Earth is exactly right.

Q What uses does the Aspilia plant have? The genus Aspilia, a member of the Compositae (daisy) family, is certainly interesting: it has representatives from tropical America through to Africa and Madagascar. The total number of species recognised in the last revision was around 60. It finds uses in solving many medical problems including eclampsia, sciatica, neuralgia and malaria. It also has antibacterial and antiparasitic properties.

This is not to say that every species will have one or more of these uses, or that the usage is proven as effective, but it is certainly a good indication of the potential biactivity of members of the genus.

One fascinating aspect about members of this genus is the way that primates, particularly chimpanzees, also appear to use them for their medicinal activity; indeed

it would seem that man may have originally learnt such uses from them.

Q Did England once have different time zones within it, as the United States does?

Not officially. Before modern communications systems, when there was no way of telling people around the country what the exact time was, people relied on their local sunrise and sunset to set their clocks. As the sun rises and sets at different times across the

country, this meant a difference in times between towns. The arrival of trains, and timetables, enforced unification around a common time.

Q Where is the temperature probe to measure the outside temperature located on a car, and why is it not affected by wind chill and/or engine temperature?

The probe is under the front bumper, protected from wind chill (which only

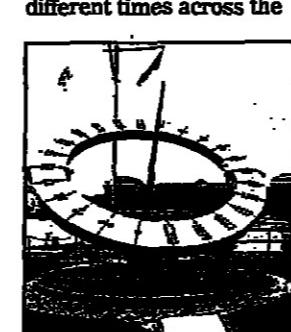
really affects human beings anyway), and far enough away for its readings not to be affected by the engine's temperature.

Q Is it possible that a planet could orbit the double star system Sirius A and B?

Sirius A is a type A1 star, with 27 times the Sun's luminosity, while Sirius B is a white dwarf with only 0.02 times the Sun's luminosity. You can consider Sirius B as being in a very elliptical orbit around Sirius A (in fact, they both orbit their common centre of mass) with the distance between them varying from about 7 to 28 AU – where 1 AU is defined as the distance between Earth and Sun. As it happens, Jupiter lies about 7 AU away from the Sun, and Neptune about 28 AU away.

Current theories suggest that planets are very unlikely to form in a close binary star system: the companion star (in this case Sirius B) would tend to throw the "building blocks" for the planets out of the entire system, disrupting their formation. Theory also suggests that only stars whose mass is less than 1.5 times that of the Sun will have orbiting planets: Sirius A's mass is 2.3 times greater than the Sun's.

You can visit the Technoquest World Wide Web site at <http://www.science.net.org.uk>



Time-keeping by the sun

40 Weekends in New York to be won with TALK to NEW YORK



Talk Radio and The Independent are flying 40 pairs of winners to New York for a weekend in March in our 'Talk to New York' Competition. Throughout February there are 2 New York Weekends to be won every weekday.

Talk Radio, on 1053 and 1089am/medium wave, is the only national commercial talk station. Talk Radio gives you the chance to have your say on the issues that matter. You can talk direct to celebrities and news makers, from Foreign Secretary Robin Cook to actor and comedian Robbie Coltrane, from Formula One driver David Coulthard to boxing impresario Don King.

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THE INDEPENDENT

When night falls in the city, too many beautiful buildings simply disappear. It's time to light up, says Nonie Niesewand

Never darken my door

Michael Faraday's statue vanishes after dark. Ironic that the inventor of electricity has not even a single lighthub to stop him disappearing like a genie, but he is just one of many London landmarks that needs new lighting.

Big cities are transformed at night by the magical effects of light. But compared to New York or Paris, London sleeps with the lights off.

The saddest place is the River Thames, according to lighting designer Jonathan Speirs. Cruising down it in a motor-launch after dark he reveals gaps in the skyline where substantial buildings just disappear at night. Somerset House is wiped out. Embankment Gardens outside the Savoy Hotel become a dense, black thicket. Cleopatra's Needle is missing. Waterloo Bridge turns forlorn and sickly. The church of St Magnus, which stands at the entrance to London Bridge, vanishes - which is why we haven't heard of it - while St Mary's, Gilbert Scott's crenellated wedding-cake of a church in north London has been put back on the map with adventurous illumination.

Other parts of London have blackout areas to match the worst lights of the Blitz. The parks, for a start, and Buckingham Palace most lights. And even when buildings are lit, many simply bleach out and look more like two-dimensional cardboard cutouts. Too much light is as bad as no light. Tower Bridge needs to have the volume turned down. St Paul's, lit from one side to replicate moonlight, looks more like a parody of itself.

"My advice to the new mayor of London is to get a lighting designer to programme a concerted effort in the same way as Coventry, Liverpool, Edinburgh and Cambridge are orchestrating their city lighting programmes," says Jonathan Speirs. Or Lyon in France, where the Mayor levies a small tax on all its citizens to light the city. Paid for by axes and funded partly by local business, the annual cost of maintaining London's skyline was turned down. All the city scheme costs each council tax payer £7 a year. "Fantastic city lighting, but they've gone for quantity, not quality," says Speirs, who be-

lieves some buildings should be plunged into darkness.

The Campaign for Dark Skies agrees. "Less light is more revealing," is the provocative message of campaigner Dr John Mason. Dr Mason mourns the loss of our greatest natural heritage, the sky at night. "Who can see the glimmer of the Milky Way in our bright skies?" Perhaps only one in a million stars is visible. Most of the problem stems from electric light that goes straight up toward the sky, illuminating nothing. Some of this wasted light even bounces off the atmosphere and reflects back on to Earth.

Good lighting is a good deterrent to crime. Since the Middle Ages when, on All Hallows' Eve, the Celts lit bonfires and lanterns to protect themselves and their crops from malevolent spirits, we have believed that light protects us from harm. Now, at night we flood our streets and car parks with light to scare off muggers. But all over the world, in cities and suburbs, a glut of outdoor lighting is obscuring our view. The Dark Skies Association, with branches in 62 foreign countries, is campaigning to do something about it, pushing for legislation against light pollution, hoping to restrict both municipal and private lighting.

They are supported by lighting designers who abhor the ugly, yellow halo that unfocused, wide beam lights bring to buildings such as Unilever's in central London. When Jonathan Speirs was invited by Croydon Council to light their suburban skyline, he had to win over Dark Sky campaigners to prove that the project had widespread community support before they could collect the £2m Lottery money awarded by the Millennium Commission.

Thirty-eight buildings on Croydon's skyline will sparkle with kinetic, colourful light; what Speirs describes as "a bit of rock'n'roll". Councillors expect Croydon to take off, with more shoppers, visitors and diners, and pedestrians enjoying the newly-illuminated nightlife.

Croydon won Lottery funding,

but London First's application for similar funding to light central London's skyline was turned down. All the city scheme costs each council tax payer £7 a year. "Fantastic city lighting, but they've gone for quantity, not quality," says Speirs, who be-



Clockwise from above: Lloyd's of London (1986), voted best-lit building; the Millennium Dome, lit inside and out by Speirs and Major; St Paul's, two-dimensional by night, fakes moonlight; the Oxo Tower, darkened for a decade, now a London landmark after Lifschutz Davidson restored its red neon logo

Dome at night will be like having a heavenly night-sky overhead. Purple-blue light beamed from the floor will play upon the vast, spherical space to make it more intimate. Because the roof is translucent to capture as much daylight as possible, that blue light at night will soften its profile so that the Dome

doesn't light up like a flying saucer inside, red and white light will play upon the lap circuit that runs around the central arena.

By day, the light inside the Dome is white and cool.

"Visitors will definitely have to come twice to experience those very different climates created by day and night," says Speirs, who is

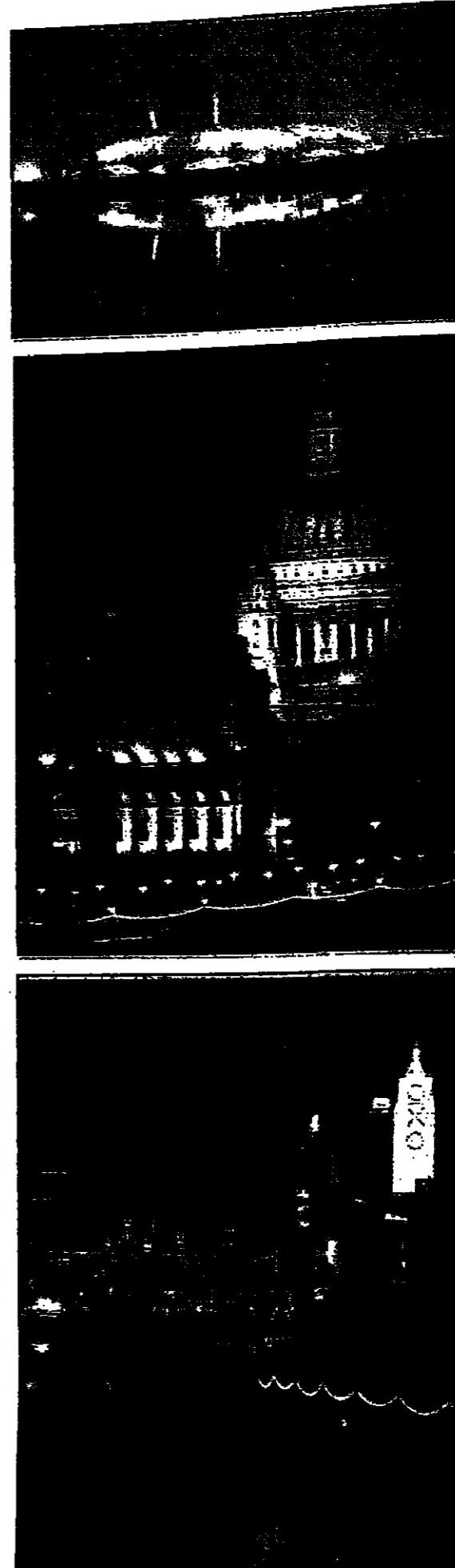
responsible for the lighting along with his partner, Mark Major.

To prove how lighting changes the character of a building, lighting manufacturers Philips built a model village outside Lyon, around a village square, scaled two-thirds down from life-size. A computerised light programme plays upon the model of a

neo-classical town hall. Simply by changing the light, the way the building is perceived alters. A welcoming glow at the entrance lures theatregoers inside, as the rest of the building is mysteriously wrapped in wreaths of silvery light. Pinpointed with light, like Harrods, it turns into a casino. As the Courts of Justice,

it takes on a steely, cold light that is authoritative and sobering. For the bank, the columns are illuminated as the props that stabilise the building. At night, its identity is established purely through light.

Bright Lights, Big City will be shown on ITV on 16 Feb at 7.30pm



This one's a real page-turner

It's as small as a pocket dictionary yet contains enough books to fill a small shop. The only drawback with my Rocket-eBook is its cost - about £300. By Miranda Seymour

OF THE nightmares I can still remember from childhood, none were so scary as the one about the nursery bookcase that reached all the way up to the ceiling. The books I wanted to read most, naturally, were the ones I couldn't reach. (How was I to know that the brown volumes on the top shelf contained the adventures of Little Rollo, a boy for whom every new day brought a fresh opportunity for virtuous deeds?) Scrambling up the shelves in my dreams to make a grab at these out-of-reach plums, I felt the bookcase rock and then lurch. The nightmare ended in a scream of fright as it swayed away from the wall and down to swallow me in darkness.

If only the electronic book had been around all those years ago. Who needs a wobbly bookcase when enough works to fill a small shop can be crammed

into a gadget the size of a pocket dictionary?

I'm in love with a book-shaped screen. Now let me tell you why.

I'm going on a long plane journey, and can't make up my mind which book to take. No need to choose; I download 10 into my nifty little Rocket-eBook. My neighbour on the plane is desperate for sleep, doesn't like eye-masks - but my screen has a discreet back-light, throwing out no distracting flickers. I can read it for hours without bothering him, or causing my own eyes to ache.

Anybody used to reading on screen knows how uncomfortable it becomes staring at long lines of close print; the real genius of the new electronic book

designers has been to produce a high-resolution screen with a proper book shape to it. You read on a "portrait" shape in

stead of the conventional "landscape" based on a TV screen; the pages turn rather than scroll. It may not sound a big difference, but, to the reader, it's everything. Electronic scanning becomes, for the first time, as easy and agreeable as reading a book. More so, if we're talking encyclopaedias: it weighs no more than a Dick Francis. Small as a paperback, but a lot more elegant, the Rocket comes equipped with what the manufacturers call "an ergonomically rounded edge" to fit into the palm of your hand as comfortably as a well-made book spine.

Maybe the best thing of all about this brilliant little invention from my point of view is that it gives me, for the first time, a way of spot-reading novels. These, as we all know, never come equipped with indexes. Suppose you want to

check the first appearance Uriah Heep makes in *David Copperfield*. Simplicity itself with the Rocket-e: just type in the name and push the button. The answer's yours in less than five seconds.

They've thought of everything: you can annotate, browse, make bookmarks, check words in a dictionary, underline, switch the font... when you get bored with doing all that, you can just lay the "book" casually in front of you on a table and wait for somebody to ask where they can get one, and how it works. Don't expect to wait long.

The makers see the biggest market for their invention in the professional readers of reference works, which are usually as weighty on the hands as on the purse. But there's no reason why the Rocket-eBook shouldn't be used in schools. If

the price came down to, say, £40 (from about £300 now), and the cost of buying books in electronic form could be substantially dropped, huge improvements could be made to the availability of information materials. Reading needn't be threatened by the electronic book, but expanded and given a broader base. Think of hospitals, universities, old people's homes - all places where the price of books and space requirements act against the needs of readers. Think of smaller groups, of people who need to work on texts - translators, adapters, editors. The benefits to them of a gadget like this are incalculable.

There's no danger of the Rocket-eBook or its competitors in the field displacing the classics people will always want to own and handle; as a supplement, not a substitute, I can see it becoming indispensable. Technology doesn't often produce something so obviously able to be of immediate and far-reaching benefit. All we need is for publishers to put their faith in the future of gadgets like this and start working out how to make books available for downloading at minimum cost.

This being a design page, I'll make a few suggestions for improvement. Page numbers would be a help, for making notes and giving the reader a better sense of location in the text. A horizontal screen shift, instead of a vertical one, would increase the sense of a page being turned. And for a gadget that calls itself a book, why not drop the conventional grey or matt-black body for something a bit more book-like, tan or red, with a logo on the curvy plastic spine?

Meanwhile, I'm just going to download another 10 titles for bedside reading...

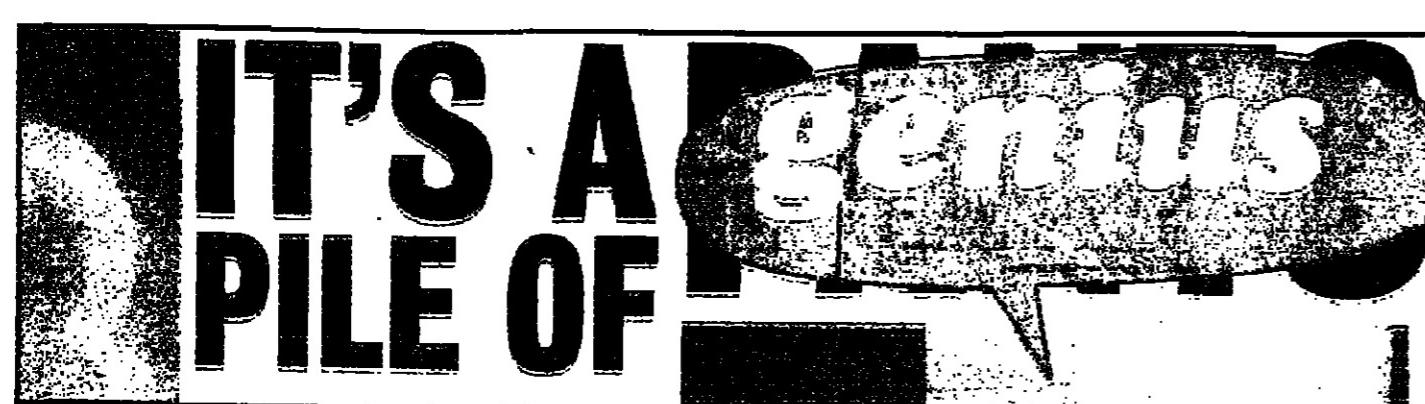
The Rocket-eBook is available from www.leapergo.com - for electronic books, contact www.barnesandnoble.com

Miranda Seymour's novel "The Telling" will be published in paperback by Picador in April

Small as a paperback but perfectly formed: the Rocket-eBook



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Laughter in the dark

Bruce Morton wants to share his adolescence with you. Don't panic: he's funny. By Veronica Lee

Death, cancer and family tragedy are not normal subjects of comedy. Unless you're Bruce Morton. In fact, the Scottish comedian's new show, *Blood Below the Window*, is labelled as being about "virginity, independence and learning to fly", but it darts between broad comedy - a robbery of train-cargo booze, theucklehead kids he grew up with - and several painfully dark episodes.

Why is the show so dark? "I'm surprised you say that, because I think it's stories about small triumphs," he replies. "It's about trying to find who you are. Those stories are there because if you want to find your independence you have to learn to take the rough with the smooth."

And how, in the segment of the show that gives it its title, Morton describes how, at 17, his family away, girlfriend in tow and desperate to lose his virginity, he climbed up the side of his house after locking himself out. He fell 22 feet and several bones, not to mention his pricier dreams, were broken. "There I was, left for the first time as a responsible young adult on my own and that was my sexual awakening."

Morton makes the dark stuff as funny as the slapstick, in a beautifully lit show that draws the audience in with the funnies before the killer punchlines, so shocking and unexpected at times that audiences gasp rather than laugh.

He had wanted for some time to use his childhood but was unsure how to do it. "It was always there and I eventually wrote it down but I wasn't convinced I could do it in stage. My girlfriend told me to go for it, but I did wonder if it would come across as maudlin or self-indulgent."

For someone who met with tragedy at an early age - his father's death from cancer and the accidental death of his teenage sister - Morton is remarkably matter-of-fact. Is it difficult to talk about those experiences on stage? "I've been there and lived them. To relate them is not difficult. If it was an emotional drain I wouldn't do it. And it has been cathartic; when people laugh,



Dead comical: Morton says that recalling his early life on stage 'has been cathartic'

you're not alone because it's laughter of recognition. My stuff is personal, but it wouldn't work on stage unless it had universality."

Surprisingly, his remaining family,

- two younger sisters - have yet to see the show, even though it was a hit at last year's Edinburgh Festival. "It crossed my mind to talk to them before writing about the deaths, but

I didn't. I don't know that we've ever sat down and discussed those things at all." But does he have a right, in talking about his life, to be talking about theirs? "I own my life and I'm

telling it from my perspective." But even so... "Not if you do it with candour and sensitivity; and with humour to take the sting out of it. I don't think my sisters, who are fairly garrulous women, would be upset. I really do have the right to talk about anything I want." His expression becomes deadpan: "I speak as a recovering existentialist" and then cracks up.

Like many an autodidact, Morton relishes such a word. He grew up on a housing estate in Cambuslang on the outskirts of Glasgow, and his dad worked at the local Hoover factory. A bright lad, he left school at 16 and did a series of menial jobs and had a brief early marriage. Then in the space of a few months in 1984, Morton sold his home, left his wife, quit his job and went to college. "It was a weird convergence of events."

His quiet demeanour lends credence to the cliched image of a dour Scot; however, Morton is anything but. He relates how delighted he was with the show's reception at Edinburgh where he performed, not in a club, but at the Traverse theatre. After 10 years on the stand-up circuit, Morton might be expected to move into television quiz shows - "I'd rather eat bees" - or even front his own show, a subject that causes the softly-spoken Morton to become animated. "And be famous for presenting". A chimpanzee with a larynx could do it. How can Vanessa Feltz or Carol Smillie be paid millions more than people who keep the streets clean?

Despite the success in moving his comedy into other areas he is reluctant to write anything serious. But if he did, would it be as dark as *Blood Below the Window*? Morton is adamant: "I think the show is quite affirming. It says bad stuff goes on in your life, but take a look back and search among the rubble and you'll find some gems there."

Blood Below the Window is at Hemel Hempstead Old Town Hall tonight (01442 242827) and on tour until 28 March (details: 0171-235 5010)

Joker, rocker, lecher, potter

COMEDY
JOHNNY VEGAS
TALK OF LONDON



Johnny Vegas: bizarrely charismatic

off the mark almost made the unthinkable happen and rendered Vegas lost for words.

"I'm used to talking at women, not to them," he spluttered, "but every time I hit a ball over the net at you, it keeps coming back. I'm Tim Henman - I'm British and I'm quite good, but I'm out of my league here." "Are you seeded?" she responded, quick as a flash. "I've found my double act," he marvelled. "We could get a Christmas special out of this."

This interplay demonstrated just how well established the Vegas character is now. However unsettling a line is thrown at him, he just rolls with it. The Vegas persona - lecherous, bitter, self-pitying yet bizarrely charismatic - now fits his alter ego, Michael Pennington, like a tight potter's smock.

But it was with a quick-witted female volunteer helping him to throw a mug on his potter's wheel that Vegas really came into his own. Asked, in a parody of the film *Ghost*, to fashion an unambiguously phallic handle, she flirted with him shamelessly - "Are you going to fire it up for me later?"

"If you're willing to push the act a bit further," he drooled, "we could do Amsterdam."

Later, the volunteer's speed

was used to signal an intermission in the cinema, the potter's wheel was a byword for boredom. How things have changed.

JAMES RAMPTON

Johnny Vegas is at the Talk of London (0171-494 5397) on Saturday and touring nationally in April

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What do gay men really want?

THEATRE CERTAIN YOUNG MEN ALMEIDA THEATRE LONDON

THERE WAS a West End play a few years back called *Straight and Narrow* which paid gay men the dubious compliment of effectively saying that they should be allowed to settle into the sort of monogamous domestic bliss enjoyed by Terry and June. It's not an option that would cause a stampede among the eight gay (or gayish) characters in Peter Gill's studiedly knowing new play *Certain Young Men*. Indeed, one of the guys, who is in what is optimistically termed a stable relationship, finds himself asking: "What are two grown men doing living together, faking all the stupidities of a fake straight relationship?"

The big enigma used to be "what do women really want?". To judge from this often sharply funny and occasionally moving piece, that question is as simple as sorting out the Pope's religion compared with the ineffable mystery of what it is that gay men, deep down, really want. These are certain uncertain young men. Directed

by the author on a stark, open-plan set scattered with a few chairs and props, and with all the characters remaining on stage throughout, the play hops around various difficult wrangling relationships, laying out a tart smorgasbord of gay sadness and soul-searching.

A crack cast perform the piece with a fantastic feel for its edgy spring rhythms but the proceedings sometimes veer dangerously close to dwindling into a mere *Sloane Rangers' Handbook of Contemporary Gay Lifestyles*. One character, Robert, delivers a lengthy, supernaturally witty lowdown on the underlying prescriptiveness of these apparently free times and on the misleadingness of categories. It's full of coruscating insights ("The anger of us all at being biologically sorted. Look at straight men. Most straight

men are male impersonators") but it sounds as though it's being dictated for publication in *Attitude* magazine.

Elsewhere there is genuine drama, albeit of an oppressively nagging and chained-to-the-spot variety. Jeremy Northam and Andrew Woodall play respectively a gay obstetrician and a divorced bisexual whose small son seems to provide both a bond between them and a bone of contention. Andrew Lance's character drives his ostrich-headed partner mad with his endless frettings about authenticity and the need to transcend cheap imitation ("I don't want a life. Life happens between those things"). Ironically, he winds up with Danny Dyer's brilliantly acted Terry, a straight-up guy young chancer who has been left without a sincere bone in his body by his background of children's homes and abuse.

Starting and finishing the play, there's a relationship that makes Vladimir and Estragon in *Godot* look like doyens of decisiveness. These recurring vignettes seem to be unfolding in the head of John Light's Michael who, in his apprensive, sexually charged dealings with Alex Newman's Scottish bit of rough, keeps announcing "Or..." whereupon the course of the scene takes an abruptly alternative route. It produces a dizzying, comically Cubist effect and powerfully increases

the atmosphere of pained disorientation. I have to confess, though, to not finding this unvaried evening uniformly riveting. Indeed, there were moments when I seemed to be living proof that you can be beside yourself with admiration and with boredom at the same time.

PAUL TAYLOR

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ONE OF THESE NIGHTS - LYNE CYRUS - TAKE IT TO THE LIMIT - NEW RIDE IN TOWN
HOTEL CALIFORNIA - LIFE IN THE FAST LANE - AND MANY MORE

Unusual ways of eating spaghetti

DANCE PINA BAUSCH SADLER'S WELLS LONDON

YOU WANT Tchaikovsky and ballet shoes? Pina Bausch's *Viktor* has them, at least for a bit, although she deflates the effect by having the dancer wrap raw steak round her toes before tying on her slippers. And for the most part, Bausch is more inclined to trust the famous potency of cheap music.

Something unexpected always comes up, however familiar with her methods you become. More than a big laugh is intended (although she gets that too) when one of her women comes forward and solemnly announces, "I want to talk to you, seriously" while reaching inside her dress to hitch up her breasts. Bausch has something serious to say, but chooses to do it her own way: unpredictably, absurdly, entertainingly.

You need to be alert to catch everything. Before we are 10 minutes into the show we have had a woman smiling although seemingly having no arms, an-

other rolled up in a big carpet, a third who is smothered under an overcoat to stop her singing and jiggling, and a couple who are "married" by one of their colleagues while lying on their backs, as though dead.

The Viktor who gives the work his name is the disembodied voice of a ghost who takes possession of a woman during a solo in which she moves frantically from the waist up while sitting on the stage and bumping slowly forward on her bottom. But might the interfering little man hidden under a black cloak also be Viktor, or is he Death, or Time, or something else again? Make your own choice.

Death and loneliness are among the work's themes, but

JOHN PERCIVAL

so are life and community. And what exhilaration there is in the chorus lines - on stage or passing through the audience - and in the sequence where the women take turns to swing on ropes high above the stage. You may learn, besides, some unusual ways of partnering, or even of eating spaghetti!

Bausch's company are fine dancers, but more than that, they are exceptional people too: before the evening is over you feel that you know them as individuals. Philistines may ask, "Where's the choreography?". But Bausch's genius is for assembling highly varied material, manipulating its contrasts of speed, mood or genre, and shaping it so that gradually you see the pattern beneath. And she makes you care; she really does.

VERA MINTON

Thanks to his two girlfriends, Blake's about to learn a new sexual position. Honesty.

TWO GIRLS AND A GUY

13

STARS TODAY

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Not so simple country folk

Gillian Welch and David Rawlings are the country duo from hell. They write grim songs about mining and rape, and you can't line-dance to them. By Andy Gill

For a couple of years now, Gillian Welch has been on a quest. Her personal grail? To write the dumbest, most ignorant chorus possible. "I mean that in a good way," she adds, mysteriously.

She finally called off her quest when she came up with the chorus to "Miner's Refrain", so dumb they named the song after it: "I'm down in a hole, I'm down in a hole, I'm down in a deep, dark hole", sung in due deep, dark tones. "It tickled me that it was so plain, almost stupidly simple," explains Gillian (the "G" is hard). "So then we set about writing the rest. It started out as a fairly legitimate mining song, until it was pointed out to me that I knew very little about mining."

Welch's songwriting and performing partner, David Rawlings, didn't know much more about mining than she did, except for what he had learnt when travelling next to a gun-ho executive from Addington Resources, the strip-mining company. "We've got a machine that can slice the top right off a mountain," she had boasted, explaining how the tyres for this behemoth cost about a million dollars each. "Unbelievable stuff!" marvels Rawlings. "They're all driven by camera now, robotics - the guys don't even have to get in the machines."

How on earth do you write a mining song when all the miners are machines? This is the type of problem that faces the contemporary neo-traditionalist country songwriter, a profession as much a prey to the grim vicissitudes of industrial style as those once employed in that industry, before the robots were brought in. Accordingly, the song turned into something even deeper and darker. Welch and Rawlings, using the refrain to lament the deep, dark hole in every troubled man's soul. It's a neat solution, perfectly in accord with the

songwriting tradition they espouse. Rooted in the bluegrass sound of older country acts such as the Carter Family and the Stanley Brothers, the music that Welch and Rawlings make has a timeless, evocative quality that is hard to pin down.

Certainly, you're never far from the thematic staples of sex, death, and God. The duo's 1996 debut, *Revival*, and last year's *Hell Among the Yearlings* are full of songs about bar girls and miners, drifters, still-houses and murders, and how sometimes that

'They didn't need our record - their lives were depressing enough already'

devil gets inside of you and makes you do the darnedest things.

To the lay listener, this may sound traditional, though Welch is keen to stress the songs' contemporary nature. "There's a very strong appeal in the challenge of writing in an established, almost stereotypical form," she admits. "Can I write one and not have it be boring? Can I bring something new to it?" She can: "Caleb Meyer" is a murder ballad that is steeped in antique harmonies and pungent banjo tunings but, unlike most murder ballads, it's not the woman who dies here but the eponymous rapist, stabbed with a broken bottle by his intended victim. Welch denies any underlying agenda to this post-modern twist: "I didn't have any higher motive or anything." "But when that started to happen," adds the laconic Rawlings, "we both chuckled and went, 'Oh, that's fine.'"

Welch's penchant for old-time music came as something of a surprise

to her adoptive parents, a pair of showbiz songwriters who worked on *The Carol Burnett Show*. "I could always hear them in the back room, working," she recalls. "The kind of music they do is pretty different from what I do - musically, it's as if they found me in a basket on the doorstep. They don't really understand where my love of bluegrass and old-time music came from. But they should, because they're the ones who enrolled me in a progressive, liberal school started by some old hippies. Every day we had music class, and they taught us Carter Family and Woody Guthrie tunes."

Although she learnt to play many of those old songs back at school, it was only when Welch went to college and shared a house with a country-music DJ that she heard the original artists performing them. "First off, it was their songs that influenced me, because that's how I learnt them. Later on, when I eventually heard the records, it became their sound. The Stanley Brothers were a huge influence on the sound I wanted to make, especially Ralph Stanley's singing - that's about as good as it gets for me."

Welch and Rawlings met at Berklee College of Music in Boston, when both of them auditioned for a country band. Discovering a love of old-time music, they moved to Nashville in 1992, like so many aspiring musicians before them.

The country music capital can be a cruel town. "If you don't have your stuff really together," says Welch, "people hear you and make up their minds quickly. And once you've been there for a few years, then you're that person who's been around for five years, and why hasn't anyone signed you yet? It gets ugly real fast."

There are compensations, though.

There's no shortage of places to play, and if you're as obviously talented as Welch and Rawlings, there's every chance that Emmylou Harris will drop by your gig to contribute harmonies (Emmylou covered their "Orphan Girl" on her acclaimed *Wrecking Ball* album). And despite the rampant commercialisation of the Dollywoods and Twitty Citys, there are still enough old-timers around to furnish a few pleasant surprises - such as when, at one of their first paying gigs, the duo were complimented on their version of the classic "Long Black Veil" by an older woman who turned out to be the song's co-writer, Maryjohn Wilkins.

"That's the stuff that happens that makes you go 'Wow, I'm so glad I'm here,'" says Rawlings. "That, and going to breakfast with Chet!"

For the most part, though, the duo operate at some remove from the mainstream country industry. "It's this totally other business that has nothing to do with what we do," reckons Welch. They may have been taken on by a Nashville publishing house, but it's significant that they ended up signing with a Los Angeles-based label rather than a local arm of Arista, BMG or MCA. Not that they have any axe to grind. "We meet people, especially over here," observes Rawlings, "who say 'Isn't Nashville terrible? How do you bear it?' But the truth is, we don't ever see that stuff - it's not as if Travis Tritt turns up at your house and says, 'Hi! I sell more records than you!' But it's OK - some people love it. If everybody liked apples, there wouldn't be enough to go round."

And there's certainly enough to go round. But is there a place for poor folks' music in such bountiful times?

Rawlings thinks so: "People are more likely to listen to poor folks' music in good times, just as they were more likely to play Monopoly in 1935 when there was no real money around."

He offers an illustration. "I was fixing our car at this dirt-driveaway service station in Columbus, Ohio," he recalls. "The place was just filthy - if you'd removed the rented TV and VCR and taken pictures of the house, you couldn't have distinguished it from dustbowl shacks of the Thirties. But they had a radio on the wall, playing Top 40 Country, and it sounded shiny and great, terrific. They didn't need our record - their lives were depressing enough already."

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Welch and Rawlings: how to be a neo-traditionalist country songwriter when all the coalminers are robots

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kes

Slow death by self-satisfaction

GAY DAD had it sewn up before they started. Equipped with a riotously provocative name, they were never going to slip by unnoticed. To quote the band's frontman, Cliff Jones: "Gay Dad is the greatest name in history or the worst name you've ever heard." With two music journalists in the band they had all the right contacts, and the rumour that they were a spoof band formed to uncover A&R inadequacies afforded that vital element of controversy. The ink was barely dry on their recording contract before they were being touted as the future of rock'n'roll.

Expectations were running so high on Friday night that I began to feel pangs of sympathy for them in their seemingly insurmountable task. But

LIVE GAY DAD/MANSUN NME PREMIER SHOWS ASTORIA LONDON

I needn't have bothered. Gay Dad glowed as if they had just gorged themselves on special rock-star Ready Brek. Their streaky mop-tops gave them the perfect balance of glamour and grimy indie chic, and there wasn't a thread out of place in their dishevelled attire.

Gay Dad's penchant for epic glam rock mixed with belligerent punk made for an energising show. Their rallying cries of "come on" and "let's go" recall the high jinks of Supergrass - though even Supergrass might blush at the

line "Aerosmith rule!" - while there were periodic nods to Bowie and Bolan. The band's first single, "To Earth With Love," had been available for only four days, but the crowd recited it as flawlessly as if it had already been canonised among the classics.

Since they prefer to look back for their inspiration instead of forwards, it would be a pity if the future of rock'n'roll were in Gay Dad's hands. But they will pass the time pleasantly until something better comes along.

If Gay Dad looked pleased with themselves, Mansun were positively smug. The singer Paul Draper paid scant attention to his fans; instead he shuffled about the stage with an affected camp that was apparently modelled on Jarvis Cocker's stage antics, but made him look severely unhinged.



Gay Dad: not a thread out of place Pangela Lubrano

Mansun's songs have a way of winding their way into your consciousness uninvited - I

was able to hum along with more tracks than I would have liked - but there is an air of conceit about them that outweighs their musical credibility. Prolonged instrumental sequences failed to hold the attention, while the epic quality of recorded material was notably absent. Worst of all were Draper's drama-school vocals. They were so nasal that I was shocked to discover that he had his mouth open at all.

If Britpop was a pastiche of the Sixties and Seventies, then Mansun are a pastiche of that pastiche. As they trawled unimaginatively through the songbooks of Blur, Elastica and Shed Seven, they served as a glaring illustration of how truly dead Britpop is.

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THIS WEEK'S ALBUM RELEASES

REVIEWED BY ANDY GILL



SMOG
Knock Knock
Domino



VARIOUS ARTISTS
Dave Godin's Deep Soul Treasures Vol 2
Kerr



LUCIANO
Sweep Over My Soul
Xterminator/Jet Star

THE NONCHALANT fatalism that marked Bill "Smog" Callahan's previous records continues to pervade Knock Knock, although his musical palette has suddenly expanded in strange new directions. It is Bill's typically obtuse attempt to make an album for teenagers: "... starting with the cover art, with its lightning and wildcats - those seem like things that teenagers identify with". Whether they'll identify with the music is another matter. Callahan's original "sadope" stylings are still featured on songs such as "I Could Drive Forever" and "River Guard", but the sheer diversity - not to mention perversity - of his approaches makes the album hard to grasp at one hearing. The best way to describe it is probably as the country album The Velvet Underground never got round to recording, though even they might find the gap between "Let's Move to the Country" and "No Dancing" too big to span.

Bill also turns his hand to psychedelic garage rock in "Held", though the languor of "Sweet Treat", with its shreds of guitar dancing like insects in the last rays of sunlight, remains his true forte. Despite the recurring theme of movement, there's a strange stasis about the album, as if Callahan experienced the displacement in songs such as "Hit the Ground Running", "Let's Move to the Country" and "I Could Drive Forever" less as a physical than a spiritual sensation. Intrinsic and reclusive, dry and elusive, this is life in the inside lane, in every sense.

SOUL-ENCYCLOPEDIA Dave Godin bestrides his chosen genre like a colossus - it was he, for instance, who coined the terms "Northern Soul" and "Deep Soul". This second compilation of rarities is, if anything, even better than its predecessor: mixing aberrant deep-soul sides from well-known belters like Ben E King and Arthur Conley with acknowledged classics such as George Perkins's "Crying in the Streets", Toussaint McCall's "Nothing Takes the Place of You" and Bessie Banks's "Go Now", and a wealth of obscurities from such as The Premiers and Bobby Moore & The Formosts - the late England captain in fine voice on the organ-powered pleader "It Was a Lie".

Godin's annotations, meanwhile, are always informative and often inspired - as when Nat Phillips' "I'm Sorry I Hurt You" is described as "Agitated, and, in an erotic kind of way, agitprop".

A FEW questions hang over the chequered career of Luciano. Such as: why call yourself Luciano, when your real name is as exotic as Jephtha McClymont? And, more pertinently, why the reggae singer once seriously considered a possible heir to Marley's throne should have failed so comprehensively to build upon the early promise of 1995's excellent *Where There Is Life*. He does, however, appear to have emerged from his largely unsuccessful association with Island the stronger for the experience, returning to his old home at Xterminator with faith renewed. The roots-reggae apocalyptic of songs such as "Final Call" is outweighed here by the militancy of tracks such as "Hold Strong", which finds Luciano "recruiting missionaries for Jah Army ... [to] blaze a fire throughout creation". Philip Fattis Burrell's production is light but forceful, with a nice relaxed snap to the grooves, and some neat touches.

Kitchen-sink superstars

LIVE KENNY WHEELER/LEE KONITZ/JOHN ABERCROMBIE/DAVE HOLLAND ST GEORGE'S BRANDON HILL BRISTOL



Kenny Wheeler: probably a genius Patrick Hinely

of his own, with breathy, expressionist smears that sound as though the air in the valves is shooting towards the surface like a submarine,

spilling out aqueous waves of half-formed phrases as it rises.

On alto sax, Lee Konitz remains,

at 71 years of age, an eccentric marvel.

A student of Lemlie Tritson's quiet revolution in jazz aesthetics, and

part of the "Birth of the Cool"

school with Miles Davis's nonet, Konitz has an effortlessly hip and indirect way

with a solo. On the one standard of the night, a showcase feature of "Body and Soul",

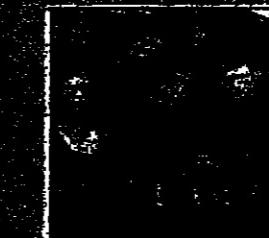
Konitz sounded as Charlie Parker might have done if he had favoured tranquilisers.

Replacing the album's Bill Frisell on guitar, John Abercrombie was unusually restrained, but the combination of his off-centre chording and Holland's magisterial command of time provided a rhythm section to die for. By the end of two long sets, you were beginning to miss the lure of dishcloth and Fairy Liquid, but this remained one of the great jazz gigs. And although no one is likely to notice, Kenny Wheeler is probably a genius.

PHIL JOHNSON

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Voulez-vous Boulez?

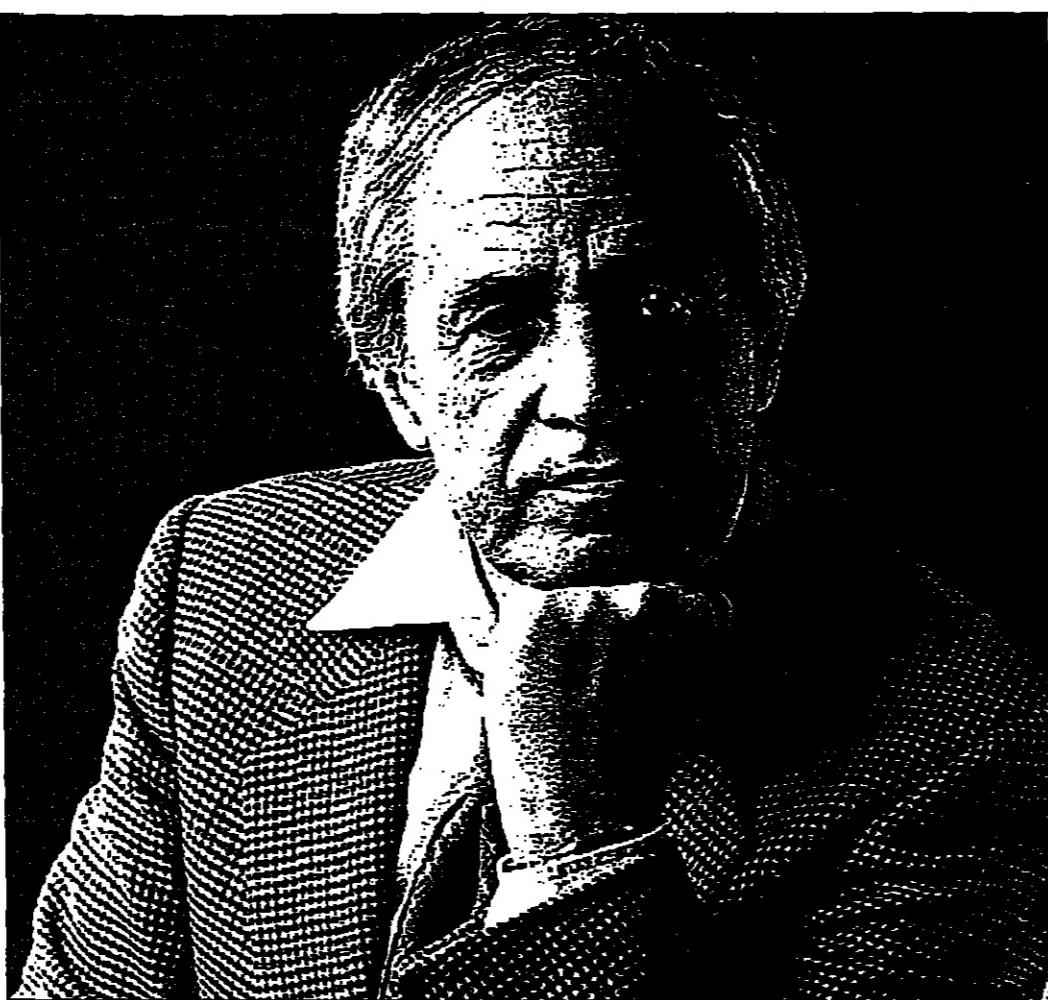
Modernist bête-noire or champion of the new? Either way, you can't ignore him: Now a TV profile and a flurry of concerts place the composer-conductor centre-stage. By Rob Cowan

Pierre Boulez is one of Europe's longest-standing musical radicals, daubed by one journalist as "an activist before he was an artist" and an unapologetic standard-bearer for creative honesty. Talking to him at the Paris Institut de Recherche et de Co-ordination Acoustique/Musique, or IRCAM, which he has directed since its government-funded inception in 1970, Boulez railed mercilessly against the idea of musical "elitism". It serves as a smoke screen for people who are lazy," he told me candidly. "For me, that is all it is. Elitism camouflages their lack of responsibility. It is pure demagogic." He speaks of elevating listeners rather than "smoking" with them to a lower level. "The lower you sink, the lower you stay," he says decisively. "It's not a question of progress, but of potentially stagnating in mud."

Boulez first came to prominence in post-war France when his fearless promotion of dodecaphony helped re-vitalise a musical culture that had been stunted under Nazi occupation. Russian new music was still frozen by Soviet cultural strictures, and so any moves towards a newfound creative freedom were widely countered by implacable opposition. "During this century we have seen the disasters of Hitler and Stalin bring culture to the lowest possible level," Boulez protests, "pressuring composers to write music that can be 'immediately understood', which, of course, means that it can also be immediately forgotten. Anyone who has not learned a lesson from these terrible times must be really sick."

The question then arises whether coded protests against oppression - whether political or otherwise - can ever make for great art. Shostakovich, for example, whose music Boulez never conducts, "I have to tell you that I have very mixed feelings about this music," he says. "It is often said that Shostakovich is the 'more recent' equivalent of Mahler; but I would say that to compare Shostakovich with Mahler is like comparing Meyerbeer with Wagner. The musical substance of his work is trivial. Okay, I can accept that he worked under great pressure, that he was afraid and that he rebelled discreetly. But, for me, that's not enough of an excuse."

And what about Shostakovich's more adventurous later works? Surely they are less fuelled by compromise than some of his earlier pieces? Boulez is immovable. "By then, he was under less pressure - and that's all it's. It's very easy to listen to, but if you compare it with *The Rite of Spring* or the best works of Prokofiev - there's no contest. Shostakovich was at his best



Modern master: Boulez is as outspoken as ever about the direction of contemporary music

when he was young and spontaneous, and at his worst when he wanted to be heroic."

Other musicians straddle ideological extremes rather more easily. The conductor Sir Andrew Davis, for example, whose repertoire includes Shostakovich and who, on Monday night, will conduct an all-Boulez programme with the orchestra that the composer himself led from 1971 to 1975. The choice of programme - which includes the sensual *Le visage nuptial* and the imposing *Notations* - is of Davis's own devising. Boulez himself had no involvement in its construction. "Once my pieces are written and printed, people can make what they want with them. But I think the sequence has been well chosen."

Boulez was a relative latecomer to conducting and traces a prominent curve of development from his earlier recordings to his latest work for Deutsche Grammophon. "I don't change my performances on purpose," he confesses. "It's more a kind of organic change. I listen to recordings I made years ago - perhaps of Debussy or Ravel - and know that I could do better now. When I was younger, I didn't take an orchestra's

individual sound into consideration: I would give much more than I received. But the more your technique improves, the freer you feel; you begin to listen to sculpt the sound. When you are preoccupied with technique, you cannot establish a proper musical dialogue. I used to have some difficulty with tempo changes, but not now."

'People don't want to be disturbed. But we must not be discouraged by this lack of energy'

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served as a model for anything more recent," he says. Boulez's favoured venue for Répons is the "Music City" building at the big La Villette themed museum site situated to the north-east of Paris. "An ordinary concert hall will not do," he insists. "The space is not there and we must always fight against the architecture." He claims that the only performance of *Rituel* (one of his most instantly appealing works) that has ever satisfied him was at the same venue, "where I could place the instrumental groups away from each other, conduct from the centre and have the audience in the middle of the hall."

The spatial requirements of Répons were realised on the recording with the help of a "Spatialia" computer programme developed at IRCAM, but when it comes to the use of video, Boulez finds that pop producers have the edge. "Look at a video on MTV and see the amount of technology it takes to sustain four or five minutes of music," he says. "It's amazing. You have a sort of firework display of equipment and effects. I find myself laughing at certain Baroque concerts on video where the camera leaves the or-

chestra and tours the church. There, your visual options are forced by somebody else - which is very disturbing when all you want to do is listen to the music."

The ongoing development of IRCAM - which now includes an expanded pedagogical department - goes hand-in-hand with the growth of La Villette. It is Boulez's ambition to build a bigger hall, improve the museum's coverage of 20th-century music and create a comprehensive media centre (to include books, CD, CD-ROM, DVD, Internet connections and so on). The idea is to relate existing facilities at IRCAM to those at the newly extended La Villette.

Boulez observes how our cultural history alternates warlike aggressiveness and peaceful repose. At present, we appear to be suffering the effects of cultural inertia. "Now that Europe enjoys a sort of balance between the two sides, and there is no immediate danger of a 'big fight', people have become lazy," he says. "They don't want to be disturbed. But we must not be discouraged by this lack of energy. I am sure the pendulum will swing back."

Maybe it has already begun to swing. On Wednesday evening, Boulez's recent work *Sur incises*, will receive its first London performance at the Queen Elizabeth Hall by the London Sinfonietta under the baton of composer George Benjamin. The concert will broadcast live on Radio 3, whereas later that night, on BBC2, a documentary entitled *Pierre Boulez: A Life in Seven Chapters* shows the composer in stimulating conversation with Radio 3 controller (and one-time BBC Symphony Orchestra producer) Roger Wright. When I spoke to Boulez, he hadn't yet seen the tape, though he seemed happy with enterprise. "I seldom do that sort of thing," he says. "I am not like an actor who speaks about my life and my activities. I compose a score, and people can judge me from that. The main source of communication for a musician, is either the work... or the performance. If people cannot imagine your world, then talking about it won't replace either the music or its performance - though, I admit, it can help."

Sir Andrew Davis conducts BBC SO at the RFH, SBC, London, Monday, 1 Feb at 7.30 pm (live on Radio 3). *Pierre Boulez: A Life in Seven Chapters*, QEH, London, 3 Feb, 11.15pm; *Sur incises*, QEH, London, 3 Feb, live on Radio 3. Boulez conducts his own *Théâtre pluriel*, recorded at the 1998 Edinburgh Festival and broadcast on Friday, 5 Feb. *Répons* and *Dialogue de l'ombre double* are newly released by Deutsche Grammophon.

Bullets over Brondesbury

SIGHT READINGS



MICHAEL CHURCH

be the president of the canton of Sarajevo, though Wilde expects that there's no chance of putting it on in that city for the time being. Getting the orchestra in, he says, would be immensely difficult. But he would love to have the opera staged in London. Where? "Oh, by anyone who showed an interest." Any London critics coming? "Not as yet." So listen up: the last performance is on St Valentine's Day.

THIS WEEK, John Kieffer leaves Artangel to become the British Council's music officer. What will be his aim? "To update the image of Britain. To reflect a musical culture which is much more broad-based than the commercial pop and commercial classical industries." Meaning? "Folk, jazz, new forms of pop and rock. Electronic and dance music, and all the new fusions, hybrids, and crossovers." He's keen to export music in "club-type formats"; he's excited by cutting-edge manifestations of DJ culture.

"What brought this British-trained pianist-composer into the game? Pure accident," replies Wilde. He had been inspired by the heroism of Sarajevo's musicians to compose a cello tribute (which Yo-Yo Ma now performs). While visiting the city he got caught in Karadzic's blockade, and fell in with Goran Simic, a local poet, who both proposed the idea for an opera and, in three frenetic days, bashed out its libretto. The plot portrayed cruel domestic predicaments; the fueling anger was directed both at the genocidal Serbs and at what Wilde terms "the smothering blanket of spurious neutralist terminology" with which the European media cloaked the ugly truth. Putting snipers on London's Monument was a necessary shock-tactic.

Wilde's compositions are theoretically abut to but in fact quite easy on the ear: "The great god who stands behind this new work is Alban Berg," he says. "But his archangel is George Gershwin." The staging will be symbolist. The Staatsoper agreed to host the show on condition that it didn't inflate its budget: the orchestra and two of the soloists are studying at the music academy where Wilde teaches, and are performing for free.

Among the guests on Sunday will

be the president of the canton of Sarajevo, though Wilde expects that there's no chance of putting it on in that city for the time being. Getting the orchestra in, he says, would be immensely difficult. But he would love to have the opera staged in London. Where? "Oh, by anyone who showed an interest." Any London critics coming? "Not as yet." So listen up: the last performance is on St Valentine's Day.

TEL: 0171 293 2222

ENTERTAINMENT: CONCERTS, THEATRE, WHAT'S ON

FAX: 0171 293 2505

| Concerts | |
|--|---|
| WIGMORE HALL | Box Office: 0171 535 2141 Mailbox: Unit 28 |
| CONCOURS | Early Music & Baroque Series |
| Fri 29 Jan, 7.30pm | HOBOKEN BLAZE - counterpoint: Love's Academy |
| Bravo! Chamber Ensemble, Jennifer Johnson, James Johnson, Brigitte Haug, Daniel Drayton, Darren Curnow, Simon Johnson, Matthew Johnson | £16.00, £12.00 |
| Sat 30 Jan, 7.30pm | LOUIS LORIN piano |
| Bravo! Chamber Ensemble, Piano Sonatas No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, | |

FRIDAY RADIO

RADIO 1
(97.6-99.8MHz FM)
6.30 Zoo Ball **9.00 Simon Mayo**.
12.00 Kevin Greening, **2.00 Mark Radcliffe**. **4.00 Chris Moyles**, **5.45 Newsbeat**, **6.00 Pete Tong's Essential Selection**, **9.00 Judge Jules**.
11.00 Westwood - Radio 1 Rap Show. **2.00 Fabio and Grooverider**. **4.00 - 7.00 Emma B.**

RADIO 2
(85.902MHz FM)
6.00 Sarah Kennedy, **7.30 Wake Up** to Wogan. **8.30 Ken Bruce**.
9.00 Jimmy Cricket, **2.00 Ed Stewart**. **5.05 Sean Hughes**, **7.00 A Very British Story**. **7.30 Friday Night Is Music Night**, **9.45 Frankenstein**.
9.30 Listen to the Band, **10.00 David Jacobs**, **11.00 Believe It or Not**, **12.00 Lynn Parsons**, **4.00 - 6.00 Late Shamma**.

RADIO 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)

6.00 On Air, **9.00 Masterworks**, **10.30 Artist of the Week**.

11.00 Sound Stories, **12.00 Composer of the Week**: Tavener.

1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert, David Hill, organist of Winchester Cathedral, joins forces with pianist Stephen Coombs for a duo recital with a French flavour, given last Friday in the Duke's Hall at the Royal Academy of Music, London. Bach: Piece d'orgue, BWV572.

Franck: Prelude, Fugue and Variations; Vierne: Nocturne, Op 35.

Vierne: Nocturne (Suite, Op 40).

2.00 The BBC Orchestras.

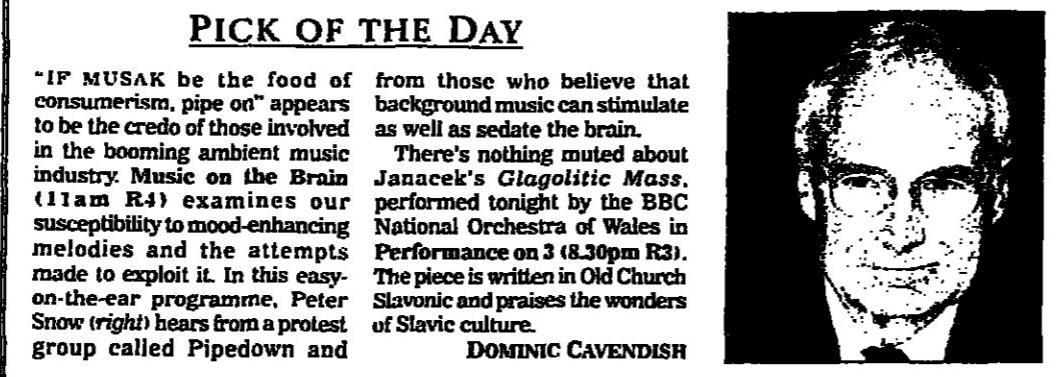
4.00 Music Restored.

4.45 Music Machine.

5.00 In Tune.

7.30 Performance on 3: Live from St David's Hall, Cardiff. Conductor: Mark Wigglesworth, Mario Brunello (cello), Christine Brewer (soprano), Susan Blackley (mezzo), Ian Caley (tenor), Neil Davison (bass), Adrian Partington (organ), BBC National Chorus of Wales, City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus, Dvorak: Cello Concerto in B minor.

8.40 A Sound Read. Ivan Hewitt is joined by Rabbi Julia Neuberger and music and broadcaster Valentine Curran to review recently released books on music. This month, a new biography of the legendary French



PICK OF THE DAY

"IF MUSAk be the food of consumerism, pipe on" appears to be the credo of those involved in the booming ambient music industry. Music on the Brain (11am R4) examines our susceptibility to mood-enhancing melodies and the attempts made to exploit it. In this easy-on-the-ear programme, Peter Snow (right) hears from a protest group called Pipedown and

from those who believe that background music can stimulate as well as sedate the brain.

There's nothing muted about Janacek's *Glagolitic Mass*, performed tonight by the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in Performance on 3 (8.30pm R3). The piece is written in Old Church Slavonic and praises the wonders of Slavic culture.

DOMINIC CAVENDISH

chanteuse Edith Piaf, a book on banned music, and 'Modern Times Modern Places', Peter Conrad's cultural history of the 20th century.

8.30 Concert, part 2: Janacek: *Glagolitic Mass*. See *Pick of the Day*.

9.25 Postscript. Five programmes in which a writer from the past who argued with passion for change is introduced by a contemporary outspoken voice: 5: George Monbiot introduces excerpts from the writings of 17th-century activist Gerard Winstanley. Reader: Stephen Thorne.

9.50 BBC Symphony Orchestra.

A concert celebrating the work of Italian composer Luigi Nono, born 75 years ago today. His music reflects his Venetian roots, his strong Marxist convictions and his fascination with architecture and space. At his death in 1990, he left a remarkable legacy of works. Presented by Anthony Burton. Conductor: Tadaaki Otaka.

Nicole Tibbles (soprano), Thomas Randle (tenor), Nicola Hodges (piano), Andre Richard (sound projection). A Carlo Scarpa architect, ai suoi infiniti possibili, come una clava de fuerza y luz; Sofiette onde serene; Canti di vita e d'amore - sul ponte di Hiroshima.

11.30 Jazz Century. Russell Davies presents a 52-part history of jazz, from its earliest stirrings to the end of the millennium. 4: *A New Orleans Gumbo*. Just what it was that made jazz happen may always remain a mystery. What is sure is that the city of New Orleans, with its rich and diverse musical heritage, provided the

perfect breeding ground for this new musical form.

12.00 Composer of the Week: Purcell.

1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.

RADIO 4
(92.4-94.8MHz FM)

6.00 Today.

9.00 NEWS: Desert Island Discs.

9.45 Serial: Victorian Internet. (R)

10.00 NEWS: Woman's Hour.

11.00 NEWS: Music on the Brain.

See *Pick of the Day*.

11.30 The Oldest Member.

12.00 NEWS: You and Yours.

12.57 Weather.

1.00 The World at One.

1.30 Picture Panel.

2.00 NEWS: The Archers.

2.45 Afternoon Play: Orchestra. (R)

3.00 NEWS: Logged On.

3.30 Desperately Seeking. (R)

3.45 This Scattered Isle.

4.00 NEWS: Open Book.

4.30 The Message.

5.00 PM.

5.57 Weather.

6.00 Six O'Clock News.

6.30 The Ghost of Number Ten.

7.00 NEWS: The Archers.

7.25 Front Row, Francine Stock with the arts programme.

7.45 Inner Voices, 'Open Pores'. Written and performed by Rikke Beadle Blair, with Helen Sheals (5/10).

8.00 NEWS: Any Questions? Jonathan Dimbleby is joined in Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, by panellists Harriet Harman MP; Nicola Horlick; Peter Lilley, deputy leader of the Conservative Party; and Andrew Phillips, Radio 2's legal eagle.



PICK OF THE DAY

Shipping Forecast, **5.54 - 5.57**

Shipping Forecast, **11.30 - 6.00** Today in Parliament.

RADIO 5 LIVE
(93.9-95.8MHz FM)

6.00 Breakfast.

9.00 Nicky Campbell.

12.00 The Midday News.

1.00 Ruscoe and Co.

4.00 Drive.

7.00 News Extra.

7.30 Alan Green's Sportsnight. Alan Green and his studio guests discuss the week's sporting issues. Plus commentary from Stoke v Man City in Division Two, and a preview of the weekend's finals in the Australian Open tennis in Melbourne.

10.00 Late Night Live. Insight and comment on the day's big issues with Brian Hayes, including Parallel.

10.30 Sport, **11.00 News**, **11.15 The Financial World Tonight**.

1.00 Up All Night.

2.30 Australian Open Tennis.

5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.

CLOTHES LINE
(100.1-101.9MHz FM)

6.00 Nicky Ball, **8.00 Henry Kelly**.

12.00 Requests, **2.00 Concerto**.

3.00 Jamie Crick, **6.30 Newsnight**.

7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven.

9.00 Evening Concert, **11.00 Alan Mann**, **2.00 Concerto**.

3.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.

VIRGIN RADIO
(125.1-126.0MHz MW)

6.30 Breakfast Show with Danny Baker.

8.30 Russ Williams.

9.00 Smooth Classics at Seven.

9.00 Evening Concert, **11.00 Alan Mann**.

2.00 Concerto.

3.00 News.

WORLD SERVICE RADIO
(198kHz LW)

1.00 The World Today, **1.30 Meridian** (Books), **2.00 The World Today**.

2.30 People and Politics, **3.00 The World Today**, **3.20 Sports Roundup**.

3.30 World Business Report, **3.45 Insight**, **4.00 The World Today**.

5.00 - 5.30 The World Today.

5.30 - 6.00 My Century.

TALK RADIO

6.00 David Banks and **Nick Ferrari**.

9.00 Scott Chisholm, **1.00 Anna Raeburn**.

2.00 9.00 OK To Talk, **5.00 The SportZone**.

8.00 Jackie Mason - Live from New York.

10.00 Dave Barrett's Phone-In with the **Midnight Psychic**.

12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN

WHEN HE was young, the other American juniors used to feel that Yasser Seirawan would become absolutely world class were it not for the need to protect his king, a duty which he carried out with extraordinary blitheness.

Despite this vexious burden, Yasser has been well in the top hundred for many years and is 33rd on the current January 1999 list - well below Michael Adams, though, who is 30th on 2.716.

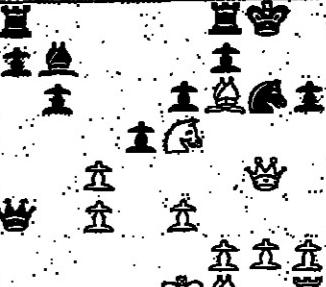
The two are currently half-way through a 10-game match at the far-from-unpleasant sounding Mermaid Beach Club Hotel in Bermuda. But match play is by its very nature tough, however delightful the surroundings - because of both the extensive preparation entailed and the heightened psychological struggle against a single opponent.

I played Yasser in a Candidates match in St John, New Brunswick, in 1988 and, though he outplayed me for large tracts of several games, I won by a clear margin owing to better nerves in time trouble. So although a friendly match is much more analogous, I imagined that Michael would dominate.

This appeared likely after Adams, as Black, recovered from a bad position in the first game on 31 January to trap Seirawan's rook in time trouble and win. But after the next two were drawn, Seirawan struck back with a good win as Black himself in a Caro Kann. The fifth was drawn, leaving a good contest ahead in the second half which continues till 1 February.

The most interesting game of all was the bloodthirsty draw in game three. Yasser likes this Queen's Indian/ Nizipur-Indian hybrid and played it in his first three Whites. In game 1, Michael tried 9...Bxc3+ 10.bxc3 Qe7 which didn't turn out well, despite his ultimate victory.

8...0-0 may look innocent, but in the fifth game Adams took on d4 at



once - 8...cxd4! and after 9.Nxd4

10...Qc2+ 11.Qxc2 ds 12.cxd5

Bxd5 13.f3 h6 14.Bh1 Nbd7 15.Bb5

Rc6 16.Qd2 Ne5 17.Rd3 Nb8

Bxh3 19.Qxd8 Rfxd8 20.Rxd8+

Rxd8 21.Kc2 Rc8 they agreed a draw.

As played, White was able to

recapture with the rook instituting a most dangerous attack. 13.Bxh6

gxf6 14.Bxf6 Qxf6 was conceivable,

winning a pawn for compensation, but Yasser's choice, 13.Bh4, was much more fun. I've also looked at

15.Qc2 but even 15...dxc4! 16.Ng5?

hxg5 17.h4 Qd6 18.bxg5 Ng5 19.Rh6

